Pacific Crest Trail Journal
Volume #1

March 19, 2019

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Anyway so after a couple millenia in purgatory (and some time on the plane talking to a future marine named Ben about various interesting things) I landed in San Diego. First thing I did after luggage collection was make Uber work finally. Mom got me a really clutch $50 gift card for them it. I hadn't ever Ubered before but it was kind of an awesome experience. I did an Uber Pool, which is where you ride for cheaper with multiple people. I really liked that because I got to meet this Chinese woman bound back for home in New York and this dude named Brett whose job allowed him to drift around and so he had only been living in San Diego for a few months. Absolutely beautiful city, too. Big blue sky ~~raining~~ pouring with sunshine onto the palm-lined roadways that skirt along the harbor and through the skyscrapers. The Uber driver had a Prius and I loved riding in it. Everything felt so smooth. I pulled the ~~seatble~~ seatbelt out and it was like silk. Not a good analogy. To pull it was just so satisfying. And the car drove the same way. I was let out by my hostel and I feel guilty now because I forgot to tip and the dude really deserved it.

I got out with my big old backpack and wandered around a minute before finding the hostel. Bustling district. Very exciting. I was looking for the hostel and it really took me a pretty good minute of searching before I noticed the unassuming pink door in between two bar-restaurant seating areas. The doorbell was a 20 second or something jingle and then the door opened to stairs. Up the stairs you come into the main lobby. ~~It~~ It's a many-colored space that seems predominately yellow and green. On the floor are two staircases that both flank a second-level staircase rising in the opposite direction. It's really cool looking place. Anyway, they took my bag but told me it was too early to check in. Fair enough. First thing I did was decide I wanted to go to the Coronado Beach. I thought I could walk there.

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Bad call. I walked 30 minutes through what is probably one of the shadier parts of the city just to get to the Coronado bridge and not be able to cross it because it wasn't pedestrian. Had to just turn tail and walk all the way back through that ghost town until I got to some coffee shop in the swankier part of town. I paid like $18 for a chorizo bowl and cup of tea, but to be fair both were really good. They gave me a little pitcher for the tea. It was green as usual but of a sort I have never had before. It's called Genmaicha and it has bits of rice mixed amongst the leaves. It is probably the most unique tea I've ever had and I really liked it.

The food made me feel better. Before eating I was freaked by dust-town. I got an Uber to Target really far uptown. It was the only one in the area to carry butane fuel cans. The ride was fantastic. So much greenery along the highway. There were also Spanish style mission towers that crowned the hills. So beautiful.

I think all Targets exist together in some kind of pocket dimension, because no matter where you go, they all look exactly the same. While I was in there it was almost a refuge from the bewilderment of California outside.

When I did have to leave I decided to change my MO for transportation. I figured it would be cheaper and more fun to do one of those $.15 a minute bike rentals than Uber. I was 100% correct. Northern San Diego is upper middle class suburbs that were really fun to ride through. I was headed for the Pacific. All that time and I still hadn't seen it. There was a park on google maps called Sunset Cliffs, and it was really awesome. Like a little bit Big Sur. I clambered down a foot-worn ~~channel chanel chanel~~ channel in a more gradual section of cliff to a sandy beach below the road. I stripped off all but joggers and dunked myself twice in the brine. I came out to bathe instead in sunlight, for the water was cold, but I got sandy. I ran to dunk in the waves again. I jumped at a big wet rock. I slipped and my right arm ate absolute shit. I got three tears in the skin and my arm hurt to use. It's all good now, but I felt like a big goofy dumbass. Can't be needing medics so early. I climbed in just my joggers glistening back up to the cliffs to dry. I felt attractive so I ~~said~~ said hello to this woman with a golden retriever ~~flir~~ flirtaciously. She was shy but definitely liked it. Some dude was playing Santeria closer to the water. The wind was ~~cold~~ cool but made me confident. Baptized in Cali, baby. Baptized in Cali. I rode my bike back to the hostel (it was a wonderful ride), took a shower, made and ate dinner, and here I am. Gonna for an early start to tomorrow. Trail time baby! Baptized in Cali.

March 20th Happy B-day, Mom!

So I got up at 5:30 or so this morning to hit the tram. I did my best to pack up as silently as possible in the dark and I slipped out into the hall. The whole place was quiet and secret, like the morning always is. So I crept around from place to place within the hostel until at last I was at the tram. I called Mom to wish her a happy birthday and hopped on.

The tram wasn't really anything special but this lady on board did keep spraying febreze and that was funny. I didn't really notice any bad smells until later, when the typical new-tram smell began to develop an understone of burnt hair. Oddly enough I did not notice this until someone somebody sat in the seat ~~next to~~ pro me. So I got off the ~~bus~~ tram and instantly saw somebody with a backpack waiting for the bus to Campo. I hung out with him for a while. He was cool, he's recovering from painkiller addiction. Unfortunately I don't know his name but he is 29 with a very rugged face, was a paratrooper, and lives in Seattle. Over time more hikers came over to wait as well because the bus wouldn't leave until 8:30. The painkiller dude was actually able to get me 6 grams and an edible for $40. I'm really stoked about that. A native from El Cajon reccommended this dispensary that was evidently right nearby. It was perfect. Not gonna smoke until we get a nicer evening but I'll get to that.

The bus ride was really nice. There was Pot-Bringer, a guy named ~~Matt~~ Peter (whose previous trail name was Medic because he saved a guy with broken ribs first day on the AT), an old dude named Bones (he's thin as a rail. I think his legs are as big around as my triceps), another old dude who has size 16 feet (and the same shoes as me), an Asian dude from China who we don't think speaks very good English (or any) because he never spoke with us, this dude named Matt who gave off good vibes generally, and then me. We all just kind of spent time chatting about various things.

The scenery outside looked a whole ~~bit~~ lot like Italy did on the bus trip to Naples. Very very lush hills. This has evidently been a really ~~goo~~ wet year for California. So green. Lots of flower patches. The "hills" are definitely not hills, either. These are some full-ass mountains. They're huge. Anyway as we got closer to Campo and everybody had gotten off of the ~~tram~~ bus driver began to talk to us. She said when I asked that we had been the most interesting PCT hikers she had driven yet. Nice. Also she was really super sweet and wished us luck and I really liked that lady. So kind. She dropped us off right by this super cool, tiny, and homey general store where ~~we~~ I got a sandwich and beef jerky and used the restroom which was totally crammed and cluttered. Really ~~felt~~ felt personal.

So we ate there then Bones, Matt, Peter, and I set out. We made it to the trail head, took the due photos, Matt and I split a doughnut from an abandoned box on the ground, and we headed out.

We lost Bones somehow after a while and eventually we lost Matt, too. We did meet a girl and

her boyfriend (or husband?) who live in Hawaii so that was cool. I'm camped here at
mile 11 or so and I had to camp early because a storm came in. I did see a lot of beautiful
scenery but I didn't have a whole lot of time to digest it because Peter and I were kind of
discussing philosophy the whole time. That was alright, but I think I'm gonna
try and hike alone tomorrow to appreciate the scenery more. I am glad though that I
listened to Peter when he told me to go ahead and set up when I did because it rained
like a motherfucker while I was making dinner. I was really fucking scared that
something was gonna fail and my tent was gonna collapse, but everything actually went
really well (thank God) and now I'm all good and dry with no rain and hail and
am ready to sleep soon.

March 21, 2019

Slept really well last night. Woke up a couple of times but nothing serious. It was
a super bright night out despite the cloud cover. I woke up before my alarm at 4:50.
Went ahead and made breakfast then broke camp by 6:20. It was cold as fuck, but
thankfully that didn't last. The hike in the dark was surreal. It was bright
I wanted to not use my headlamp but the sage brush looked black and so did the sky. Like
an ashen beach. Eventually the sun started to break out as I descended into Houser
Valley. Beautiful place. Lots of live oaks & skirting a lively stream and green grass.
The climb back out of the canyon was a bitch. I met several people on the way up
because I was just crushing that shit. It was a blast. As I mounted the crest there was
this dude standing just outside of this huge rolling cloud and he scared the fuck outta me.
Keeper of the mountain. Said hey and kept going. On the other side of the hilltop the sun
began to break out all the way and I was cruising warm on this high rolling field area.
So beautiful. Before too long (but not before spying a couple of rabbits) I saw Lake
Morena in the distance. On my way down to it I briefly said hello to this woman
with thick long ^blonde^ dread locked hair named Hannah and kept going.

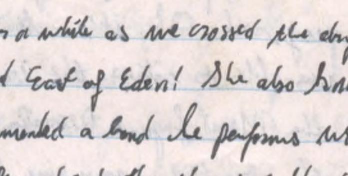
First thing I did upon arriving in Lake Morena was walk up the street to the much advertised Malt
Shop. I ordered a chicken sandwich and sat with this almost 65-years old dude named ~~Greg~~ Guy (that's a (?)
who was in really good shape and his friend Crawdad who was a little more raw. Guy gave me
of really good advice regarding spending habits because I had said I wanted to do big
miles and that I wasn't sure at first whether or not I wanted to stop in at the [?] p. He
said that loading up on food (town food) was a worthy expense when possible.

he said it might even be necessary. This was good to hear because that sandwich was as good as all hell and I will be sure to eat at such places whenever I can. Speaking of which, before I left some local dude at another table recommended Murray's in Julian. Said it was even better eating than the malt shop, much to the cook's playful dismay. We'll see.

I took a dump in their toilet and I think it was around noon when I hit the trail again. I met up pretty quick with Hannah and we chatted for a while as we crossed the dry plain out of town. She's really awesome. We talked about books. She also read East of Eden! She also knows of Sufjan Stevens (and taught me how to pronounce it) and recommended a band he performs with sometimes (and it is her all time fave-band) called the National. She and I leapfrogged each other throughout the day and I hope that's consistent because she is really cool.

The road out of Lake Morena feels like the Serengeti or something; it's really cool. After a while I came to this place where the trail goes through an underpass of a road. Hikers being cool as fuck, there is heavy graffiti all over the underpass. I really wanted to add myself to the register there but this pen was all I had. My knee on the right ~~foot~~ leg had been aching a bit, so I was interested in a ~~stopping~~ break soon. So I figured that I'd take my break there and test out an idea I had for an impromptu writing utensil.

I got out my lighter, broke off a thin, dry stick, and held it in the flame until the stick caught fire enough to make the end very ashy, and viola!, Perfect implement for grafitti. I don't know how long the drawing will be there but it was very very boldly printed so hopefully lots of hikers see it. I did something like this:



Really cool, I think. On the wall also there was a book recommendation. Someone wrote to buy Lone Cow. Sounds interesting, at least.

The section of trail just after that underpass has been one of my favorites so far. It was this huge swath of green grass and occasionally live oaks that touched the feet of mountains nearby. So beautiful.

Back into the mountains. I hiked along this creek far below some cliffs called Kitchen Creek. Beautiful thing. All the rocks and land around it are tinted orange and the land seems rusty and desolate. I passed people more less and less frequently as I climbed and eventually I came to this gateway on a road that seemed like a relic lost in an ancient wasteland. I felt alone for miles and miles around. But eventually I made it to where I'm camped now in Fred's Canyon and there are a ton of people here and as opposed to last night plenty of wind cover in the form of live-oaks. I ate dinner with some of the folks camped and it was really nice. I've also got a really good pitch on the tent right now so even though it's raining again, everything seems dryer than before.

March 22, 2018

Today was big. I woke up at 3:30am and just couldn't sleep anymore. The night was
dim but it wasn't as well slept. I was out of camp around 5:20. It was dark as fuck
but lit silver by the moonlight and stars. It was wild, looked like I was stalking the
craters of an asteroid. I began to think about mountain lions. I started singing to drive the
imaginary mountain lions away from my thoughts, "R-E-S-P-E-C-T!" Very ~~bad~~ bad
bad. Look at that big grey rock. Oh, it's a tent. Oh, oh, oops. Probably pissed him off so
bad, but at least he was able to witness the irony.

I was going up to the Mount Laguna Recreation area. Very cold. Why the fuck is there
snow? It turned into this beautiful snowy pine forest. Melting snow dripped ~~into these~~
from ~~orange~~ orange red pines and hung steaming in the air.

I went in to the general store to resupply. The man who owns the joint is said to be a
colossal dick. He does overcharge a ton on hikers products ($4 smart water) but he wasn't
ever a dick except for what my fear of him made him into. The place was very Mom & Pap.
Or more like a mountain lodge. Products ~~stuffed~~ stocked in cardboard boxes with small
price stickers on each one. I tried to pick up everything I needed in my hands but I kept
dropping stuff so he gave me a basket.

From Mt. Laguna there is an ominous view of San Jacinto 60 miles ahead, Furious the Saint
broods ~~draped in~~ gripped by a smoldering white beard. I only hope that when I confess ~~on~~ at the feet of his
power he ~~opens his heart~~ allows my passage.

After this was desert. Huge vistas of ~~the~~ bleak land all the way to the Salton Sea.
Terrifying and huge. Not a distinguishing feature. You'd lose your mind. Trail on an orange stone
ledge. Face it. Beautiful, but terrifying.

I camped at last after 25 miles hiked and here I am in a small gravel grotto
in between four boulders on the the top of a hill. So many boulders. I climbed through
tunnels between the rocks. I smashed my pipe. I danced in a hole in between stones.
I went to meet the hikes nearby and clambered over their stones too. I called out
"Hello," from the high rock above them. A girl from Louisville named Olivia. Really
cool. We talked. She teaches outdoors education. Blonde and very cool. Climbed away over rocks
to this huge king boulder with a good tent-site below. More tunnels. Atop the boulder
High winds and beautiful California. Too high wind. I return to my grotto.
Chill in sleeping bag. Music. Watch the sunset hopped just to the grotto g...
Pain by War on Drugs. Waves, Kanye. Sober, Childish Gambino. Back in tent, night.
Sleeping bag

March 24, 2019

So, yesterday was some day. I left the older dude I had camped with and wished him to have fun and he said "Of course I will, I'm here." and he watched the sun rise while I walked on. I really liked that. After a few miles I met Stingray who was providing trail magic. He told me not to have snow gear shipped to Idyllwild because I am going to need it to get to Idyllwild. He also gave me cookies and stuff. Super nice dude. Evidently he helped the Second Chance Hiker a lot. I felt awkward accepting everything he was willing to give.

The hiking was long and hot. In and out of valleys and over ridges. One of the big highlights of the day is that I took my first backcountry shit of the trail. It was mad successful. I was afraid of taking one, since my toilet system seemed a little sketch. Rather than bring toilet paper, my plan was just to use my water bladder as a bidet. Risky thing to take chances on, but it totally paid off. I got perfectly, completely clean. With more fine tuning I could probably lessen the amount of water it takes, as well. Really happy about that. Feeling very innovative.

– I'm at a breakfast place in Julian and I just asked some Spanish speaking people to translate this Spanish grafitti I found near Lake Morena a couple of days ago.

"Cuando no tienes nada que perder: SALTAS.
Y cuando ya lo has Perdido todo Vuelas.
Asi de simple." – Fatima Ortiz Sota

Evidently it means something like "When you have something to lose, you're down. When you have nothing to lose, you jump." Very nice.

Anyway, yesterday. I decided to hike shirtless for a while and that was nice but after a while I put it back on because I realized I was as sunburnt as all hell. I came upon a group of hikers chillin' by a weird cool buggy group. One of them, named Phillip immediately offered me some of his joint. Then he invited me to smoke a bowl of his stuff. This dude was really buggin' out over me. It was really uncomfortable. So I left before long hiking high. I much prefer to do so sober. But this dude Phillip must have really liked me cause he raced to catch up to me. We hiked across the valley floor toward Julian together and hitched together as well. The people who picked us up were very nice. The driver, a woman, sold whiskey and she let us have a bottle. Apparently it would normally cost $60. Wow. Haven't had it yet, I put half into my smart water bottle. Rainy day. They also gave us each a beer. Really awesome people.

In Julian we went directly into the Mimi's Diner. I had forgotten about the Murray's recommendation. This is okay because the Diner was super good. I loved it. Lots of types of people walking around. Modern and attractive biker chicks. The food was good, too. I had a French Dip sandwich which I had never before tried and it was really good. After that I went to Mom's where they gave me free pie, Ice cream, and apple cider.

Amazing stuff. I had no idea pie could taste like that. So good. I went to the grocery ~~best~~ and got what I need to Warner Springs but by the time I had finished all hotels were booked and nobody was taking my thumb. at first I planned to walk the 12 miles down the highway back to trail. Wasn't gonna happen. I tried to Uber, I tried to taxi, I tried to get the cops to take me. No luck. Eventually I walked into a closed store with a hiker's welcome sign, opened it, and asked the owner if for $50 he would take me back to trail. He said no, but you're welcome to sleep out back. He had a cute dog that really liked me. I took his offer and here I am. Gonna hitch out ASAP.

March 24, 2019

So today was long and complicated, but I think it turned out beautiful. I woke up on the back porch of the Deli and went to breakfast at a place called Granny's or something. Eventually when I finished eating French toast and writing I went to the road with the thumb out when a trail angel named Ghost with a fantastic old man Squatch beard. He took me back to the trail and we talked about things and he linked old stories to each topic. Real nice dude. He said you could get rid of druggies out of your way just by scaring them. No confrontation necessary. Activate that paranoia. I wound up at a bridge in an old river-bed and there were some hikers (this dude with gears tattoo-ed on his skull, the Naked, Ghost, and this tall quiet guy with a patchy-but-still-cool beard) and I walked on. Lots of flowers on the trail. It was basically magic. So many purples, yellows, whites, and pinks, and oranges. As you passed by their ~~the~~ smells would wash you down so well the butterflies took interest in you and fluttered by your nose before sailing on ~~to~~ up the hill. All on the edge of a massive valley. Unforgettable.

Not too long after the flowers I began to get lonely. ~~I can't describe it o~~ I hadn't seen anybody in a day or two and I was afraid I had passed my chances to ever make friends on this trail. Hard to explain. I know it's dramatic. Still, it's how I felt. I was feeling homesick. So I had wanted to sleep in a small cave advertised on Guthooks but when I found it it was actually a very small cave and basically a drainage hole and I was alone. I saw that there was a big campsite that had water. It was 5.1 miles away and it was already 5:00 pm. Also I had been hiking only in jogging shorts since 3:30 (awesome). But I knew what I had to do. There'd be people there. I was desperate. I hit the trail. Pounding out my problems. I would make it to camp that night by God. As I turned the final round I met a girl. Her name is Lullaby. I was still just in the joggers (I felt hot as fuck). We talked and she listens to MGMT. Got to check out more. I had said hello a couple times but she couldn't initially hear me due to headphones. She's cute! and seems around my age. Idk. Anyway she said bye by her "family" even though

we were going to be at the same camp. Weird. But it didn't matter because when I came around the weepy California Oaks by the campfire was Phillip from yesterday who I perhaps dragged on too much before. I think he was just overly high yesterday. Really fun guy to talk to, now. And also we might be developing some kind of trail family. Dude made a fire and everybody in camp came to talk about. Gear-head was there (because he's doing an alternative PCT), this dude came in late named Noah who seems cool. Dude is also about my age and I like him, and last is this awesome German dude named Dorian. He said something to me as we were heading to bed bed. I think he asked my name again. I asked him the same question. He said, "I'm sure we'll see each other again in the morning. In real life." Hilarious. There was also this kind of chubby but perhaps still kinda attractive because of her personality girl girl whose name I didn't get. And also an old woman who was really cool whose name I didn't get. The gear headed dude was kind of annoying sometimes but he's still real as fuck. He has read quite a few books, though he'd have you not believe it. Lots of beat stuff, which I completely completely appreciate. Phillip also smoked me up again. Good times. Oh yeah yeah, but the gear-headed dude said that the people I will wind up hiking with probably probably haven't even started the trail yet. Because they start in May and just catch up. Very exciting. This is going to be such a fantastic experience. Let's go! Lots of stars. Music. Shooting stars sometimes. I heard an owl the other night! Goodnight

PS: Today was 100 miles hiked. Damn!

March 25, 2019

I forgot to write yesterday that while I was camp-bound I saw a small silvery snake who slithered politely away as I came to him on trail.

I have a strong feeling this evening that everything is at ease. I only hiked something like 8 miles today. I started around 8:30 after breakfast with the camp crew (of whom I may have forgotten to mention Dean and Allie. Both of whom I am very fond. Dean was a 3-year old ranch hand who talked about how big the Sacramento valley was. Allie is an old woman with red hair and good times) and stopped at like 12:00. I walked through purple glazed valleys of green between gentle hills whose guardians were jackrabbits and where I practiced cartwheels and ran in the sun. Later I aimed to climb a st tumble-down pile of stone in the plain and it turned out to be Eagle Rock. But when I made it to Warner Springs peace coalesced. I showered from a bucket with a pitcher while talking to the dude in the stall next to me about his home in New Zealand and tan lines. He's getting off trail tomorrow because he just wanted to give backpacking a try and didn't love it. Olivia from Louisville is here and we talked local and it was great. I went on a brief walk after reading some and listening to Carrie and Lowell by Sufjan Stevens. I also talked more with

[redacted]

anya

~~Frollick~~ Fro Cie

Lullaby, who is really cool as usual. I do realize though that everyone in her friendgroup likes her more than anyone else in the friendgroup. Such is just the way things are. &.

I really love this place. A school with baseball and football fields in the green valley here lots of hiker culture around, Warner Springs is my calm before the storm. I bought gloves and an anchor and the lady said she wanted to play with my curly hair. I've always liked that compliment. Though she said it was ~~ab~~ "adorable." Bitch, I'm a man! Lol. Only hiked 9 miles. A good day. EdgAF.

Can't believe I almost forgot to say this: cows! I saw cows. Went to pet one but it walked away. Hung out with cows and Smiles and Crunch

March 26, 2019

So last night before I fell asleep and after I finished journaling I heard this singing through the mummy bag. My first thought was that it sounded like an Islamic prayer for the evening maybe? I was really interested, like maybe it was a hiker. I walked over in the shade towards where I could hear it. I saw a shadow standing there but the song was far away. "Do you hear that singing?" "Yeah I'm not sure what that is." A third voice from a tent rang out "I think it's a Native American chant. There's a reservation down there. Or Coyotes." ~~I guess it~~ He was right. As I fell asleep the throaty song danced red on the fringes of the sound of the highway. Never fighting it, but behind it always.

I woke up around sunrise ~~that~~ this morning and got to moving on out. Sprockett tried to fearmonger me about Sore Joints but who cares and I headed into the fields. Before long I saw a ~~board~~ herd of cows. I have heard before that cows really like music so I decided I would ~~tr~~ try singing a cow song as I passed. You know, I ~~definitl~~ definitely ~~did it~~ got their attention. They were all up in the trail. Eyeing me real intense. One cow was hopping backwards along the trail and cows are so big I had to focus on the one but what if a different cow charged. I kept walking and singing and nobody charged. They eyed me like, all the way until I was out of ~~sight~~ view.

But anyway I hiked on. I went through this area with those special small leaved oaks whose branches hang wide over everything and sandy trail and Agua Caliente alongside. It reminded me, with the green mountain backdrop, of the introduction to Muppets: Treasure Island and so I spent that entire time singing that song like "Shiver my timbers shiver my sail, Dead Men Tell Tales." and I really liked the line "When the ~~m main sail~~ main-sail's ~~s~~ set and the anchor's weighed, there's no turning back from any quest that's laid." I feel like that advice's been lie.

I passed Dorian sitting on a rock by the stream and after the first climb saw Lullaby. We

talked about Noah and his likely success in his pursuit to be a pastor because of his evident passion
for the Bible Job. A good Job. And anyway I hiked on lots of ascent today. I met two guys William
(who might now be called Compass) and Patrick (who might now become called Compass) and a friend of
theirs who was a girl whose name I never was able to successfully pronounce. I walked right past all
three of them down the wrong trail down the mountain until on a whim I checked Guthooks and made it
on a-right. A very complicated and frustrating ascent. I don't really know why. I felt like my mile count
was getting small after the near-0 yesterday. I stopped to rest on a rock and look at the ~~[illegible]~~ area
around there. It was a garden of orange-ish boulders and towards the bottom ~~float sand dunes~~. Sand dunes
bordered by sage-brush. The boulders looked very supple. The color was skin like and the surface was smooth.
It seemed muscular. Then Patrick passed me. And so did a guy named Bad Cheese. I was feeling competitive
and began to push beyond my normal speed. I had to swallow my pride or I'd miss the trail. Let them
have the race. But anyway I was the first one into Mike's Place because they both stopped at a creek
that I didn't need to stop at.

Now, Mike's place. An amazing place, surely. As you walk down the trail to the hiker area you get some
really odd vibes. Old Mobile Home with trash piled up, nobody around. I see a trail that leads
deeper in and I hear voices. I knew already this would be a good place because this beaming Asian
thru hiker named Thomas sung its praises as he left, but I was having major doubts. I keep
going. I get down to where the people are. Two dudes in tie-dye shirts helping and working around. They
were definitely spacey as fuck But they had a slice of homemade pizza (for which I was desperate) and
showed me where to get beers. I was amped. But I was afraid the hikers that came in might
ruin it with their discomfort. It's one of those pills that's pretty tough to swallow, especially for
those who do not allow themselves to enjoy ~~marijuana~~ marijuana. One of the spacy worker dudes
told me and Bad Cheese about how he had been working on a pot farm in Anza (a small Cali
town where everybody grows) for a week and made $700 and now was back on trail but that
he was going to stay with ~~[illegible]~~ Strange a while. Strange Bird is the resident caretaker of Mike's
Place. He wears what like a ranger's (or mountie) but he has painted the triangles ~~to~~ be green and
the dome of the hat blue to ~~match~~ look like mountains and sky. He talks very quickly and analytically and got
ridiculously almost non stop. Sounds dead-ringer to Hunter S. Thompson. I lit up quickly (they had a jar for
weed being smoked at the table (which apparently some asshole William stole a lot from)) and drank two
beers and a capri sun and donated $5. That was all they were even asking. A lot of people who might have
been uncomfortable did show up and I tried to play mediator mediator between ~~[illegible]~~ all and the crowd. It wasn't
working all that well. One girl drank none of the kool-aid. She kept saying "Vortex." She was definitely

right. It seemed like that island from Pinocchio where people turn into asses but at the same
time they were all good people and to relax with them was amazing. ~~The~~ The Strange asked
if anybody played instruments and when I said yes he produced a guitar which I played and
everybody complimented me on it. So proud. They also really liked my singing. By then Lullaby,
Noah, and Dorian had arrived and Jam was producing mad amounts of pizza and
Lullaby, Dorian, and I got high. Both of them are so awesome high. Turns out Dorian
plays a lil' guitar too and so he played Wonderwall (haha) and you could tell the vibe he was creating
was nothing like the one I had (although it wasn't bad) and we checked out the house where there
were like 2000 alphabetized DVDs of movies and we were smoking these huge good cigar joints. There
was also really cool artwork. I painted my name into the trail register it looks really cool
We eventually had to leave but man it was a blast. Everybody looked so good as we shared
our memories and thoughts ~~[illegible]~~ filtering water from the tank.
We're all gonna be a trail family, I think. And a really good one. Lullaby, Dorian, Noah, and me.
"Me" is no longer Jacob, either. As we were walking to camp (Noah found oranges
in this cooler which were so fucking good) we passed Dean's camp and he had
seen me running through the fields yesterday and he was like, "I think we oughta call
Frolic → you ~~Frolick~~!'" At first I felt like it was too whimsical, but the more I think about
it the more I like it. Lullaby had evidently really been trying to decide a name for
me with Dorian and Noah. I really like ~~the~~ her, she is beautiful and hilarious, but she is also
26. Idk. Anyway, now we're at camp and this is going to be fucking amazing.
Also! Strange wears a tail and has a pant-loop for it. So fucking cool.

March 27, 2019 Wednesday

We all slept next to one another cowboy camping last night. Everybody woke up around 5(?) and
we laughed until start around 6:40. The desert scenery was probably some of my favorite of the trail.
The flowers were balanced by green grass and scrub brush in equal parts growing around orange
boulders. Many smells. All day we hiked in a troop. I had the distinction of leading most times (not that
it meant too much to me) because as Dorian so kindly put it I pull the group's speed on. We all stopped
for an early lunch around 8 miles in by an old cistern. After eating a while we began to head out but
first we did yoga as led by Lullaby. She did a small shoulder massage on me and then Noah. She's
got this wonderful care in her. For some time I was uncomfortable ~~[illegible]~~ with the amount of power she has
over all of us, but she's just a wonderful girl who wants to make everyone happy and at ease. So who can
complain. We stopped later after butterflies at an amazing place whose name I can't recall but that

it was named for a Walt Whitman poem. There were three cardboard cutouts of Walt, John Muir, and HDT. Henry's beard is so fucking odd, ha ha. Everyone at that stop (owned by a trail angel named Mary) seemed to be really in love with our group. We seem to be celebrities. As we were leaving I was filling up my water bottle from filter bag and she said "Why did I even put my pack on? That's going to take forever." "No, it's fine." "Oh, you have the regular, true." "You making fun of my mini?" Nach. "It's not the size that matters." Me. "What is it then? Flow rate?" Dorian. Everybody around was cracking up laughing. ~~We ha~~

We hiked on to almost exactly 20 miles and everybody was fucking tired. Not me as much though 'cause I'm already used to it. On the way Lullaby sang and then let me listen to her playlist. Offered me to hear a song. I really loved it. "Arrival of the birds." I listened to her playlist for some time. I really loved "Reel around the Sun" and evidently it's her favorite song. I'm falling asleep as I write. ~~We~~

We made it to Paradise Valley Cafe and I had a huge Bison burger, fries, chili, a milkshake, and ordered a beer. Some German thing Dorian approved of. He evidently learned all of his English from texting an American girl. Legend. We're the Four tex. Lullaby got some wine. Sleep time. Listening to Parsley, Sage, Rosemary, and Thyme. Make myself read some.

We've slept right outside the bar.

March 27, 2011

The weather this evening is too cold to permit much writing today. Luckily, today hasn't been the most engaging. I spent it mostly alone, although I was happy. Lots of climbing today. Actually all of it was. Just up more and more. At the time it didn't bother me. There was this great view of the desert on ~~one side~~ the right and San Jacinto on the left. I was really happy at the time, but honestly all day has been kind of blue. I haven't felt like I at have been on the vibe today. Can't really say why. Sometimes it happens. I'm feeling it again but it could just be the cold. It was a tough day physically, too. Climbing and the top of the hill was windy with blown down trees.

Just kind of thinking, but not thinking. Just feeling morose. Trying to sift through it. I think I'm tired right now and that's it. I am super tired.

Apparently we're going to have to go up through snow tomorrow. It's just that sometimes I don't feel like I know what to do. Where am I going? Earlier today I was thinking about Lullaby, and that did make me feel better, but it's kind of dumb really. It's actually really fucking dumb. I am ~~a teenager~~ so lame sometimes. Like, why do I have to feel all that?

The wind stopped ...

Rainy Day People, Sun Down, Gordon Lightfoot

March 30, 2019 Saturday Day 11 (?), Idyllwild, CA

~~March~~ Yesterday was so awesome. Don't judge me too much for the entry the other day. Some days are born sad. and the whiskey makes a man honest.

We woke up yesterday surprisingly well rested after the shit-show that was that night. Near constant high speed winds. We were all together bunched way up. But by morning the wind was dead and I felt well rested because even during the long stretches of wind worn wakefulness I listened to music and watched the mountaintops and stars above them.

But anyway the hike was really dangerous. There were steep snow ~~chutes~~ ~~stee~~ chutes that I had to cross without microspikes. The second stretch of them in particular was extremely frightening. To slip would probably have been to die. I hate to say that as it sounds so melodramatic but as far as I can figure it's true. You would very carefully place each step in the steps frozen in the snow before you. I bless the first person to put them there. During our most dangerous traverse the morning was new enough to have kept the footsteps solid ice, but if there wasn't a proper foothole, if the banks were low or not there, the ice made every step a matter of faith. There was one moment when neither foot was firm ~~and~~ I had to move forward, but the only "sure" points of contact were my trekking poles. I had to put all my weight on them, believing that the ice wouldn't slip away and find a new foothold. I made it, but with knobby knees. I had talked ~~yesterday~~ the day before with a guy named Owl about breathing to calm yourself and I did that. "Breathe to your feet." I knew that no matter how scared I was I had to keep going.

After passing that section I didn't feel much fear for the rest of the day. I had made it through the toughest part and everything after felt manageable. As we climbed we were going through a pine forest burn area. The mountains were stony with snow and the trail was overwhelmed with fallen charred trunks.

The trail skirted rockfaces under overhangs and around cliffy corners. The view of the desert floor ~~R~~ 5,000 or so feet below was omnipresent. That morning you could see the glitter of the city down there below the fanta-orange sunrise line of the horizon.

More and more green were the pines as we climbed but the trail became more difficult to follow. We had been tracing the path of footsteps in the snow and eventually we came upon two similar pilgrims who let us know that ~~ou~~ our path was not the official trail. ~~The difference was neglig~~ But it was the <u>real</u> trail. The way of the people (via populi) had dead ended and the eldery ~~folks~~ couple we met didn't know what to do. There were footsteps kicked up to a bouldery rock face that they

thought might lead to trail so I started on up. I had to put my poles in my right fist and use what fingers I had free and my left hand to find handholds as I so slowly followed the faint trace in the rock face. I thought I might just be climbing thus until I reached the ridge but before too long had passed I came upon the trail pristine ~~and~~ flat. From there I think the difficulty of the hike dropped significantly. The section of trail there from Paradise Valley Cafe to Idyllwild had been closed for five or six years because of a burn in 2013 so the trail had been really rough even aside from the snow but after losing it and restriking it our troubles seemed to be over.

We hiked for awhile until lunch where Lullaby, Noah, Smiles, and I ate by a small stream. We had lost Dorian early on and by then we knew he was safe but he still wasn't with us. I used the very last of my fuel to boil ramen noodles and I put tuna in and the sriracha chicken flavor packet and talked. When we got moving again we began to lose elevation and the land became more regularly snowy and green. We passed vistas of fully forested slopes covered falling in snow to unseen streams. ~~We made~~ I was alone when ~~our trip changed from mounting~~ ~~necessarily~~ ~~trending~~ the land at last became more flat. We were in a rolling pine forest with tons of snow everywhere where I began to realize we could gambol rather than tread. I dumped off my pack, hid behind a tree, made six or seven snowballs, and began to wait. My first victim came out of the trees. Crunching forward still in snow-fear mode with her eyes down on her feet. ~~It jumped~~ Smiles. I jumped out ~~then~~ from behind the tree with a shout and began the attack. She fought back fiercely ~~but soon~~ and the battle resulted in lots of laughs. We tried to set a trap for Noah and Lullaby but Noah saw me. I should have let him go and waited to surprise Lullaby but I jumped out and started to ~~throw~~. Lullaby soon came within range and the battle was a raging foursome with all enemies friends. We made snow angels and then Lullaby and I stayed behind a while to build a trail snow man who we named Sierra.

I was slipping and sliding everywhere with no microspikes and she said it was like I was dancing and so I really began to ham it up. We glissaded down a slope. Talked about Harry Potter and Avatar the Last Airbender and it was so beautiful. High snowy summits seen through green.

We finally made it to the parking lot where road let to ~~Idllw~~ Idyllwild and we sat down on a bench barefoot and waited for Dorian. Who would show up but Hannah from Day 2! She's now Billy Goat Queen and apparently, amazingly, it was her that I woke up passing at 5:30 AM screaming R-E-S-P-E-C-T. She said she thought it ~~h~~ was me. So awesome. We discussed androgynousness and whatnot. She already finished Leaves of Grass. So impressed.

She left, Dorian came, and we hiked down the road three miles barefoot due to wet shoes to finally arrive starved for comfort at the Idyllwild Pizza Company. Noah, ~~Gr~~ Smiles, + Crunch were there and

saw we haggard three through the window. Reunited and it feels so good! Uh!

I got a 12-inch pizza with ~~meatballs~~ meatballs, jalapeños, tomatoes, feta cheese, etc and traded a slice for Lullaby's and she thought mine was too spicy. We went back to camp and drank and smoked but everyone was too tired to last too long and we slept.

I slept really, really well. Best sleep on trail. Today ~~was~~ ~~taken~~ it's 9:37 AM and we finished ~~m~~ eating breakfast at the Red Kettle just recently. Now I'll look for loose-leaf tea. Also gonna call mom. ~~Be~~ Dorian is on the phone speaking in German with his family. It's cool.

March 31, 2019 Day 12 Sunday

Yesterday was a blast. I met this cool dude named Cowboy who has hitchhiked to every national park at breakfast and we talked about Gordon Lightfoot.

After breakfast and about an hour of journaling in the diner I went next door to this herbalist who ~~fi~~ ~~who~~ (praise the lord) sold tea by the ounce. And he had a ton of different kinds. The place smelled like incense as soon as you walked in, ~~the~~ there were various odd mystic implements. The works. The place was called Merkaba. Apparently a geometric spiritualism thing. Dorian was with me and I bought raspberry honey and something like 9 ounces of tea. I got a white tea with heavy fruity elements. Feels like an introductory white tea.

~~I~~ After that Dorian and I went to the ~~farm~~ a local farmer's fruit market where I tried and purchased kumquats for the first time. Noah says you want to roll them in your hands before eating them. After that we ran into Smiles, Lullaby, and Noah in a salon. And Noah told us that he and Lullaby were getting acupuncture. I was really somewhat jealous but it's good I didn't spend the money. They said it would be at 12:30. ~~G~~ Lullaby went off to secure us all a home for the night, Dorian went too, and I went to resupply. Very excited because I'm packing out peanut butter and tortillas for my raspberry honey and that is going to be delicious. However, my pack is so heavy as fuck right now.

~~Hey~~ ~~Then~~ I got a hitch from a dude named Chris in a ruggedass Jeep to Paradise Valley Cafe. I needed to get my snow gear there. ~~T~~ The dude works fighting fires all over California and he saw Bigfoot while doing so in the Trinity alps. I got to the Cafe and they had sent my stuff up to Idyllwild. I was able to get a ride (still from Chris) back ~~th~~ and got my stuff and bought some weed from the odd dude with huge jars and I went back to the cabin and made tea and smoked the weed. I got an indica from the dude (named Jay) and it was so good to smoke on the back patio.

We went out to the tea place so folks aside from Dorian and I could see it then hung out a little

while longer at the cabin before dinner at this expensive bar where I got a Calimari sandwich and drank some of Lullaby's beer and she and I talked long into the night but I have to hurry up and pack, place.

~~Same day, 10:15pm~~ Don't know the time but I'm sure it's

April 1st, 2019

It's probably early morning that I'm ~~event~~ writing because I was too tired when we first made camp and I woke up recently for good. Yesterday was one hell of a day.

We rushed to pack everything up in the cabin and amazingly we had our shit together by 8:15 when the man that owned the cabins would drive us up to the trailhead. Snow came on pretty much immediately. The microspikes were nice but by the end of the day being rid of them was a blessing. ~~the~~.

We climbed up into the pine forest on the mountain and through their branches you could see the surrounding peaks fall away. We stopped for some time at the junction of the PCT and the Jacinto Peak trail but my mind was already made up. Lullaby had had a rough morning and was behind so we were waiting but I took off just before she got there because I was really excited to climb it.

The climb was definitely not easy. Never was it dangerous, but it was definitely not easy. The tracks basically lead straight up steep ass ~~exact~~ ascents sometimes. You would basically just kick your spikes into the near vertical wall before you. It was so fucking tiring, man. I was definitely during some spans of time moving by will power alone. But I made it up first of the group. Sat down on my sleeping pad and started making my peanut butter and honey tortilla. Crunch came up soon and then Dorian then Noah, Lullaby, and Smiles. We cheered everybody as they made it. Two high school age dudes also came up and they gave us food, it was cool. The view was also cool. My favorite thing about it ~~saw~~ was the sights of Big Bear and Baden-Powell. Very badass mountains.

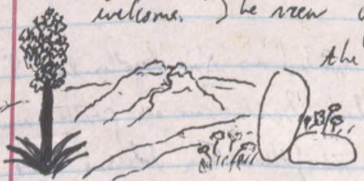
But anyway the descent was a fucking blast. We were glissading at every opportunity. The pines passed quickly but the mountains on the horizon did not. The trail for the afternoon and evening was also beautiful. There was this moment when Noah was walking ahead of me and we were on the ~~left~~ right side of a ridge, so the slope was higher on our left, and there was a sunset gold view of Big Bear framed by green on the right. Noah's blue Osprey backpack. Everything I see looks like a magazine advertisement. It's awesome.

We had to night hike to make it out of the snow before camp and I think that's what fucked up my evening. By the time we got to camp I had come undone. My hands were too cold to make dinner and my headlamp was dead so I was trying to hold my phone in my mouth for light but I also needed to lend Noah my stove, ~~set~~ set up my sleeping bag, and decide about more night hiking. I also felt really guilty for my evident strained normalcy. I don't understand how nobody else ever has weird moments. Since I've been up I've just been looking at some city lights. We got this awesome

evening view earlier of I-10 skirting the feet of ~~Big~~ Big Bear. Shimmering by the purple mountain. Cool.

April 2, 2019   2 weeks on trail

Yesterday we woke up to this beautiful sunrise on the mountains across the valley. I hopped in my sleeping bag to the spot where I watched the city lights and Lullaby came too. I got started after Smiles on down the mountain. Being back in the desert was fantastic. So many flowers. Even more, I think, than before Jacinto. I felt so welcome. The view of the mountain was ridiculously phenomenal. That little valley at the base of the mountain, so amazing. ~~[illegible]~~



I met a couple of hikers at the bottom called Panda, Fat, and Sassy.
I was gonna make lunch but Smiles gave me news from
Crunch that there was trail magic three miles ahead under the I-10. We pushed. The walk
was so awesome most of the way there. Walking through neck high piles of boulders and
yellow flower bushes. Every time you turned around Whitecapped San Jacinto showed peace in
the universe. But eventually it became this brutal washed out gravel wasteland that ~~[illegible]~~ would
cater the wheels of Mad Max in any reasonable world. But we made it to the
underpass. I got the last beer and a Gatorade and got an Uber with Panda to In-~~N~~-N-Out.
Really good food. I got a Double-Double, fries, a chocolate shake, and then animal fries with a vanilla shake.
I ate it with ~~[illegible]~~ Fat and Sassy and I don't think Fat liked me because Sassy did.
But he put me on to animal style so no hard feelings. I love how ragged a guy can look
and be surrounded by such normalcy. Just regular somewhat snotty Californians doing their thing and
there I am with full survival gear and haggard appearance. So normal next to so harsh.
It's really thinly spread, normalcy.

After In-N-Out Panda paid me for an Uber and we got back to trail but waited until
evening to hike and the sun set ~~purple~~ pink above a lavender San Jacinto as I walked across
the valley to the northern mountains.

I wound up night hiking 5 miles or so and that was cool because it was like jumping
to ~~light~~ hyperdrive. Couldn't admire any views so I just pounded miles. 27 miles yesterday.
Woo! Camped ~~alone~~ with Crunch though. Apparently everyone is hunting. Peace!

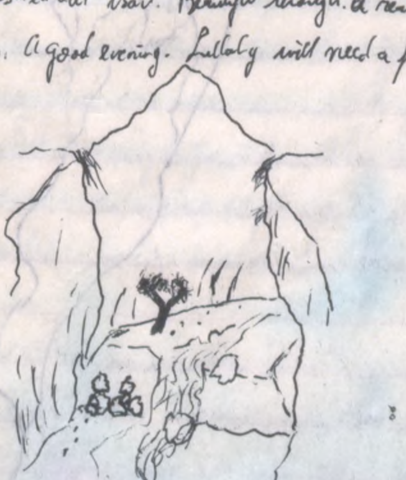
April 2, 2019

Today has been weird primarily. Crunch and I woke up and didn't hike really
until others arrived and Lullaby arrived and I was hurt because she kept emphasizing how
little extent she seemed to care that she might be having to leave. It was really p[illegible], I let

myself act like a dick. I was feeling like she was using the fact that she had to leave as a weapon but I knew this was a mistake. I was just kind of like "Well, I mean, it's been real. That's just kind of how I'm feeling." I picked up and headed out. I was so hurting. Just unhappy. I went on through this then river canyon. The trail was awful. Why? Down trail. I fell and hurt my knee. My shoe got wet. The canyon closed up to just river. Check Guthooks. I'm a mile and a half off trail.

I hiked back out into the main valley. I walked until it was time to cross Whitewater River. Lullaby was sitting on the other side. I threw my shoes and socks over and sat down beside her. She got straight to the point and told me I'd hurt her. We talked about it, cried, and took a shot of whiskey. Then we played in the river. I grabbed on to a rock on the bottom and let the river try to take me. I got Lullaby to try it. Splashed her a couple times. She got her whole head under so I had to as well. The water was pushing so hard. I loved it. Intense on every surface of my skin.

She and I hiked together a while but I was emotionally exhausted so I didn't really know what to say. I went on by her ~~as~~ when she stopped on the hill with the sole sole 17" wide. I made it ~~back~~ to the next creek and it was Mission Creek and ate lunch then followed it 4 miles or so but through a hellish washed out trail. Beautiful though. A real canyon. Now I'm here after all of it and so are ~~[illegible]~~ Lullaby and Dorian. A good evening. Lullaby will need a few days off but we're going to make it work.



Sand falls soft as I lift my foot
Breaks the pulsing membrane of the creek

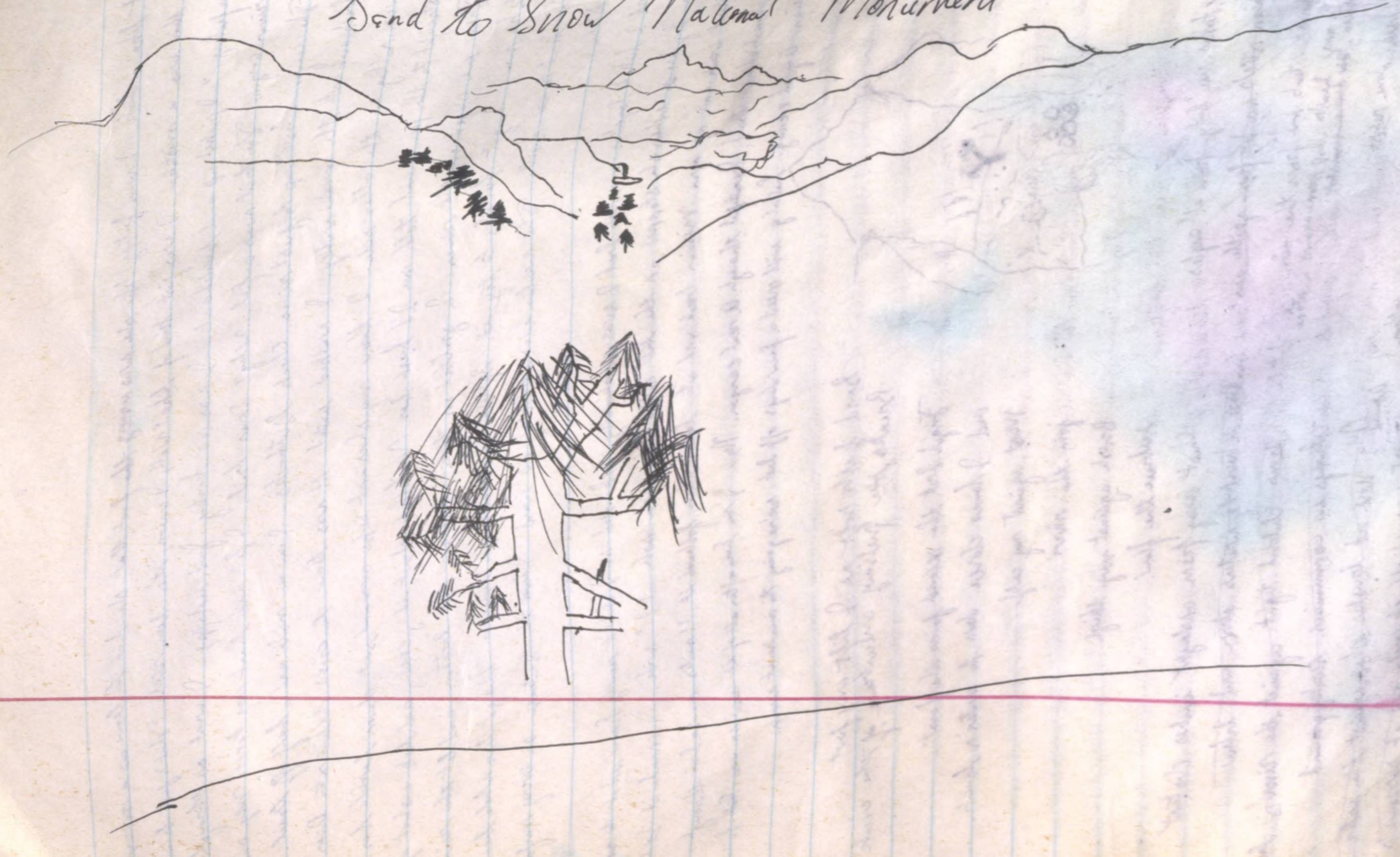
Frigid but the second joins the first
and I lower closer down to water's touch.
Mist against my calf
join the river
Brush against my thigh
embrace the flow.
Shot away from onslaught inches distant
~~Now Churning waters above and below~~
~~Arms clutched tight against the river's force~~
~~Always in communion seeking ground~~
~~My nose it brushes clear against the waters~~ around
~~Against my skull it curls and it swoon~~

~~The river takes my body from all angles~~
~~Its passion steals me far from gentle air~~
Jealously it steals me from the air
Anticipation; my hands clasp ~~stone~~ against a stone ~~a billion currents~~
Neck and head alone resist
River, ~~[illegible]~~ forsaken embrace me in a million currents
Earth forsaken Mind forgiven

San Bernardino National Forest

or is it

Sand to Snow National Monument



April 2, 2019
I'm camped out alone inside this abandoned cabin. I really miss people. I've been hiking alone since around 2pm. I left camp after Lullaby and before Dorian, Spaghetti and Panda and Gasper. Passed Lullaby before we'd got quite out of the wash out. I took a long lunch break at about 10 miles for like 2 hours. Smoked my bowl, listened to Flow State by Jacob Sultanov, and bathed in the sunlight with BraveFloppy. Gasper came along as I was packing up but we talked for a while and since then I've been alone basically. I did see a lizard with iridescent scales and a roadrunner and deer. I also read Ulysses during my break. I need to make Big Bear tomorrow. I miss people. Popped my first blister today. I pray that I don't spend too much more time alone.

April 3, 2019
Yesterday I didn't write much about the landscape, so I'll try to fix that today. It really was beautiful. As we came out of the canyon it was your typical boring brown desert hills but then we entered what I believe is called Sand to Snow National Monument. There are orange trunked pines there that grow around boulders and scrub brush. I've had Chuck Berry stuck in my head since being there. It did turn out yesterday evening and some this morning to be snowy. Very annoying after the stretch we've had since Idyllwild, but I survived. Through the sand and the pines you'd frequently catch views of snow capped San Gorgonio or even at times Saint Jack.

This morning there was more snow until I got far enough down to more sand and pines, but this time sans boulders. It felt very different here. Very classic National Parks System. I accidentally took an alternate trail on a the opposite (left) side of the valley. Better views. I also earlier had met Cowboy the Canadian dude who was super awesome and Otto who is German but harder to understand than Dorian. Still cool, though.

Eventually we left the green valleys. Pines remained but they grew more warped and dusty in the sand blasted expanse. A bit of information provided by Big Bear Hostel told me that as we hiked we might see Joshua Trees. I have only ever heard tell of Joshua Trees. Gasper had said he wanted to hitch to the NP for them. I thought they looked like driftwood. I didn't have any idea what to expect, but I was looking. When I saw one, I knew. It hit me. I did a double take. Like "Oh, yeah. That's a Joshua tree." Silver wispy branches hanging with that loose bark that could come off with an easy pull. And green on their ends. Reminds me of an American Style Mallorn. Beautiful trees. This place really had a desert landscape. Really looked like it ought to. There were mountains in the direction I had come. To the Southwest. To the North east it was infinite desert where roads led to ghost towns sucked dry as the hills that laid randomly in the basins between suggestions of mountains. I hadn't seen a Joshua Tree in a while.

I turned a corner and there were tens of them. I climbed a suggested fire road for a suggested view and after a steep climb I reached the top where on the eastern rim there stood a lone Joshua tree. It looked out to Big Bear behind (before) it. I touched my hand to its trunk and my head to its branch. When I came back down I kept making up stories to try and explain the feeling of specialness about the place. Legends of buried treasure at its feet or something. It was a very special tree. I walked on and saw a polished white Crown Vic with its side doors and trunk open wide at a dust ~~boat~~ parking lot by the trail. It was a family. A child in a spiderman outfit sat on a blanket on the other side of the lot. Only the woman saw me. She was wearing a straw sunhat, a of red and blue flannel, and jeans, and stood with a baby swaddled in cloth while her husband worked in the trunk. I gave a quick wave, said nothing ~~else~~, and walked on. The wind blew her hat off and she went "Oh!"

If I looked to the west you could see the Joshua tree up there still. Above o. the hill.

I turned a ridge and couldn't see it anymore.

I was able to hitch into Big Bear Lake after a while of standing by the road in the wind by a Mining Engineer. I feel bad I can't remember his name. Rather difficult to talk to, but very nice.

I made it to the hostel here in Big Bear (Big Bear Hostel) at the exact same time as Lullaby [illegible] and Dorian. Evidently they smoked weed with half the trail at a campsite I passed too early in the day (Panda, Gaper, Everest, more) but they all wound up bailing on the last few miles that I did. I think though that Lullaby is going to get them later.

But we all just ate dinner together and I gave her a piggy back ride because she's got the bad feet etc. I love their vibe. Gaper and Panda, that is. Gaper is a former (completed) Physics student that went to India and I really think he's a super cultured dude. Panda is just awesome. We ate at this awesome place that really may have just been called Himalayan Restaurant. Lullaby got everyone an Indian Beer that reminded Gaper of ~~something~~ one called Kingfisher that was described by them as sweet and fruity. I could see what they meant. Ha ha, Good conversations the whole time.

Then we bought Ben and Jerry's. So hyped to eat that. I'm writing in the kitchen of the hostel. People are ~~listening to~~ watching Indiana Jones in the next room. They just threw Marion in the snake pit. "You bastards, I'll get you for this!"

I need to become more independent on trail, I think. Don't want to be clingy. But anyway, I'm clean, cleaning our clothes, in hostel-supplied temporary clothes that Panda pointed out walking down the street have a big hole in the right thigh that makes it obvious I'm not wearing underwear. Oh god, hilarious. Ice cream soon.

PS: My dinner order was Lamb Vindaloo (delicious), garlic naan, and rice.

April 7, 2019

I feel like I should have written the date on the top line. anyway, zero day today. Can't forgot to detail yesterday evening, either.

After I wrote in my journal I joined a big group by our room and chatted with them for a while, Panda, Super, Lullaby, Dorian, etc. I went out with Dorian and Otto to smoke. I smoked the weed I bought from Jay. Gorilla Glue. I then went in to the living room and ~~Dorian and~~ we three watched Friends. But not until a long debacle concerning The Trailer Park Boys ensued in which I could not mange to use the remote to navigate away from it. Hilarious. We watched the first episode of Friends, anyway. It was hilarious. It has been so long since I watched it that I forgot how good it is. Primarily at introducing the show, characters, and style of plot navigation. How genius it is, how natural a depiction of conversation and friendship.

Listening to Pawn Shop right now high on Alaskan Thunder Fuck in a backpacker hostel in California. How's that to sum up a moment? My pack is ready to go. I've loved being in town the past day and a half but I'm itchy for trail all over. Gonna have to leave ~~o~~ Lullaby, Dorian, and Panda behind, but who even cares. I love them all, but I'm sure I'll see them all again soon. I didn't see all that much of them today, I guess. Thought it felt like a lot. This morning Lullaby made pancakes and they were delicious and I met a girl that Super likes a lot named Sunkist. She's pretty cool, she had a shirt that said Canna-bus and it was a Volkswagen van. Philosophical attitude. Described a feeling of winter and spring fighting for control of the desert. Beautiful. We talked about the tune I've been hearing made by [what] someone (who I now think may have been bullshitting) named Doctor Bob who is hiking to Pennsylvania ~~she~~ has termed a Western chickadee that sounds something like ~~Ph so~~ Hmm Hmm Hmm. She had heard them too. I don't know whether I asked her about the Joshua trees, but I was always talking about them. I also downloaded Joshua Tree by U2 and spent all day singing 'I still haven't found what I'm looking for' and I infected everyone in the hostel with it. Dorian & Lullaby went out on a walk and I resupplied at this liquor store. I was using a reusable shopping bag supplied by the hostel and it was ~~opag~~ opaque. I was taking things off the shelf putting them in the bag, breaking at the Nutri-Grain bars when the little old lady behind the counter and asked if I was using my own bag. "Yeah." "Well, you had better be sure to come pay for that stuff." Huh. "Oh, oh I see. I guess this is pretty shady my bad." "Yeah, it is. You had better just hurry up to the counter." When I came to check out she said a hiker had tried to steal from her recently. "His ~~Gf~~ girlfriend came up to buy something and he slipped something worth $2.99 into his pocket." okay lady, don't think I'm a thief, please. But whatever, I was disappointed somebody was giving hikers a bad rap, and I had heard of Wifi stealing Strange's weed, so I believed her and went on. I packed up my food bag and hung around. Eventually Dorian and Lullaby came back and we went to the post office to send my ice axe to Kennedy Meadows

and I think she sent a box out too. I was telling them about almost losing my hands earlier and they were like, "We were just there today, I just put something in my pocket and she jumped down my throat." It was them. Judy's crazy, fuck her.

Pretty much everybody went out to resupply but me and this dude from Britain somewhere. Some place in the midlands. This is important because everyone in the North is brute-ish and everyone in the South is soft. Boudica + Cogidubnus. God dammit, I really can't remember his name. This dude is awesome, I feel terrible. Suggs? I don't know. I'll find out. Hanging out with this dude was awesome. He would poke fun at the French. "They're definitely a cool people, but dammit they know it." He and I smoked together a few times with Otto and they talked about "inter-railing" which I suppose is riding a train through the countries of Europe. They'd use rail tickets as joint filters. The guy ~~smoked~~ smokes spliffs regularly, evidently. I like to smoke those, but only on occassion. The sharpness of the inhale is really nice somehow. But ~~the~~ right now I'm feeling like a bit of a weed snob. I have 4 different strains on me. I've got a single homegrown bud from one of Sarge's (the owner's) friends which he gave to me as a "good behavior" award for being sure to pay him the $25 I owed him. I meant to smoke it today because I can't store it anywhere but I'll figure it out; probably a gram and a half of the Gorilla Glue from Jay, an indica; the moonrocks from San Diego (hybrid); and an eigth I bought here from Big Bear Buds who delivered it to the hostel of Alaskan Thunder Fuck, a sativa recommended by Sarge. I was at first nervous to ~~buy~~ to try the Sativa because of the weed back home but it was actually just really nice. We watched the Pitch and I noticed the British style about the movie. Everyone in it acts out of implied power or quick witty reasoning. I was able to analyze it pretty well because of the weed, I think. But anyways before this we got pizza carryout from Saucy Mama's which was a whole journey because we had supped pre-pick up on a spliff. Very international feeling, being with Otto and British dude. But the pizza was <u>so</u> good. I had meatballs, jalapenos, and tomatoes. Sooo good. There was a book of poetry here Lullaby and I looked at that had a poem called Frolic: — Eh. I don't feel like writing it right now. Gotta sleep soon. I want to find out British dude's name, though. Got it! Just remembered. He's Joe. Cool. Off to bed.

April 6, 2019

Woke up around 6 am today in the dorm and did some final preliminary packing. Lullaby asked from her high ~~bunk~~ bunk decorated with the phoenix of the heart when I'd leave. I talked to some people and they said 8:30. Around 7:30 she got up and made this amazing breakfast of eggs, potatoes, and bacon. I really enjoyed it. Man, I hope I see her again. I left with confidence though. I gave her a hug that was perfect and I told

her that concerning our chances of meeting up again down trail ~~Rotes~~: "I'm not even worried about it." I really hope we do now. I wound up hiking 19.6 miles. Didn't even mean to. But anyway in the morning Joe recommended British rap called Grime and specifically an album called Made in the Manor by Kano. I had never really explored the genre but today I listened to the album and I really, genuinely loved it. I think he must be on trail around somewhere. I want to tell him I liked it, and ask if he listened to Sublime Sublime which I suggested 'cause he was talkin' about Oasis. Listening to What I Got right now. I also took a pretty good lunch break composed of hot fries and two peanut butter honey tortillas. I was reading ~~tty~~ Ulysses and chillin' with Otter. Someday I'll be able to take longer breaks, today was kind of chilly. Otter and Gage were the day's primary hiking partners. Gage is cool, ~~apa~~ apparently he used to own a restaurant in NYC. Pretty cool. However, he set his pace using me and that was kind of annoying to be honest. But he's still cool. We started hiking on the same day, too. ~~Lots~~ Lots of great views today of Big Bear Lake and snowy San Gorgonio behind it. So dope. There are mysterious very tall mountains impressed upon the horizon at the end of the valley I'm in here along the Holcomb Creek. I'm thinking it's Baden-Powell. Must be really high up there though because we're at 6500 feet right now.

I'm seeing a lot more of Stephen Dedalus in myself lately. There was a moment where Lullaby and Dorian were doing that whole flirtatious reference to each other as a couple couple, thing because of the Liquor Store Owner but I know it was to make me jealous. Or something? I know that sounds bad, but it's just the way it is. I'm gonna leave that at that. It is crazy, but I still believe it.

Anyway, I hope I see anyone besides the ducks I'm camped with ever again. Ha Ha. 'Night.

April 7, 2019 Mile 300

Did a big miles today, 22 miles. Once again, the primary pursuit was people. I had a good lonely hike today though. I woke up really early and the sky was pink and purple behind the silhouettes of the pines and the mountain. Beautiful. I watched it some time but the night had been cold and cold it was still so I was eager to get going. I walked 'til it was warm. Long enough to see the clearer image of those "mirage mountains" and I ~~camped~~ laid down on a rock to eat and look at it. White shirt slightly unbuttoned tracing down to black patagonia short shorts exposing tanned legs bordering the view of snowy Baden-Powell. All in California sunlight. I was eating my beloved peanut butter and honey tortilla when Gage appeared. He evidently had seen me that morning tear down camp efficiently and "was inspired to get up early as well." He stopped where I had. Very Phillip vibes from Gage. I told him I'd s

hike alone after probably 6 minutes of his eager following. The day felt much better after that. I took a long ass break where I took a shit amongst pines far off trail. Then I laid down in some other pines satisfied and relaxed for probably an hour and 45 minutes. I read Ulysses and fell asleep. Got up so tired I didn't want to hike again. Made myself do it. Passed a ton of day hikers as I got closer to Deep Creek. All look at me in practical awe. Can't believe it's only 2 pm. I swam for a minute and laid on my Therma-Rest in the sun on the sand. Just very enjoying the texture and coolness of water on skin. Started hiking after with my shirt unbuttoned over the cool wooden bridges and along the crumbling canyon wall of Deep Creek Canyon. Tall rectangular cliffs crumbled away at peaks supported "apparent" pines ~~the~~ high above them creek water. Beautiful. I began to get tired however and my mood worsened. I was sad about the flowers' not being bloomed again and evidently I lost my headlamp throughout the day (Phone light writing as we speak) and it was getting darker but I pushed through to the hot springs. Very very glad I did. Saw Brian (Canadian "Cowboy"), Sunkist (very glad I caught up to her), Gage (eh), and three (?) random people. One of them is named "Rocket Man" and coincidentally, he looks like Elton John. The other two left and the team encouraged my nudity because that's how things are done here. Although at the time they were all clothed. But I talked and smoked and undressed to find the Hot Spring. I found one in the river somewhere where a ton of people were chilling and this dude jumped off a rock into the cold ass river. My hiker friends went up to one more in the rocks. I joined them after a while. Sunkist and I were the only ones in the hiker group naked but there were a bunch of other locals who were naked like a couple (and it was the guy's first time), this dude with curly hair kinda like mine equipped with a bong, and some other guy. We all smoked and talked but I started to get too warm so I jumped out (not literally) and into (") the ~~lake~~ creek. Really cold. Dunked my head, got up and went back into the warm. Best feeling ever, both times. I did this cycle one more time, got tired, and left. I just finished dinner (delicious), listened to ~~a~~ Loving Loving twice in a row, and am now going to sleep! 'Night.

PS: Today, right at mile 300, I stepped over a twig and I guess it moved because somehow I just got really scared and hopped out of the way and then I saw it slither away and knew it was a snake. Really scary. Also ~~this~~ ~~dude~~ I had just finished writing a minute ago and I suddenly heard footsteps of an animal run up on me and I got real tense when a dog ran past my head, just making a glancing blow. It was the dog of bong guy. He's called it a couple times since, but silence.

April 8, 2019 ↰

Did it again. Damn. But anyways. I'm pooped as hell right now. Very high on the Gorilla Glue. Hazy couple days.

I woke up this morning and got straight out of my sleeping bag naked and luxurious and got into the Hot Spring where I bathed with Sunkist (who was also naked). ~~then~~ ~~it~~ after long I mentioned I wanted to get in the creek water. She pointed out a rope swing on the other side of the creek. We had to do it. Freezing cold swim across the river to the other shore. Long pause for composure. Get the swing with a stick. Breathe. Smile, cheer, swing out far over the water let go and splash up frozen. Do it again. Swim over to a nearby pool where the long dude, whose name is the Forax, was hanging out. True to form, he smoked us up. Also showed us a vacation slide show.

We left but not before a guy and his girlfriend (who is about to hike the PCT) gave us breakfast. Papayas, mangoes, and then three freeze dried dinners. A ~~Backpacker's Pantry~~ Mountain House beef stew, an Idahoan Potatoes thing, and ramen. I also lost a toenail somewhere around this time. Furthest right toe. Got it in Leuko-tape and neosporin. Not as horrendous as it sounds.

But Sunkist and I hiked out of there around 8:30 or 9 and walked a flowery scenic canyon all the way until the trail broke out ~~of~~ over a large valley at whose one end glows Whitecapped Baden-Powell.

We walked along the rim of the valley most of the day. There was this ~~long~~ section where we walked through rusty pipes and along a quiet midday Highway. Sunkist said Zombie Apocalypse vibes. True. But anyway we hopped over a hill into a beautiful Lake Valley. Silverwood Lake. So beautiful as we left in the evening light filling a hollow with light gold dust. Just had a huge feast at this awesome campsite (ramen bomb, Beef stew, peanut butter + honies, and Sierra Mist), smoked, and am now very desperate for sleep. 'Night!

April 9, 2019

Fantastic day today. I woke up around 7:00 with Sunkist and the campground we'd stayed in was full of morning moisture. The sun was soft and cool. We powered through a climb ~~around~~ over the hills around the lake and came back down into the main valley when we started this climb over low-ish grass hills decorated with patches of flowers in yellow and purple. We passed under powerlines and along a dune-like ridge when suddenly ~~then~~ it fell away and wind blasted in from a sweeping view of the rumpled valley ~~of~~ at the feet of Baden-Powell. The mountains looked super hazy in an early cloud cover. We hiked with the ~~S~~ valley dunes and the mountain views until we dipped into the crooked canyon

of a tiny stream that felt so wild but was really within a mile of McDonalds.

We just exploded in that McDonald's. We took up a whole section of the place. Brian, Rocket man, Sunkist, Lawrence and Lisa. I got two chicken sandwiches, a large fry, a soda, an oreo mcflurry, and an apple pie. Later as I read Mysteries I ate six Hostess powdered doughnuts and coffee. We had to deal with this crazy waiter lady. Hands cold. More later.

April 10, 2019

Glad I stopped journaling when I did. A conversation was brewing last night between Lawrence and Lisa and Sunkist and I would chime in every now and then but my primary focus was journaling. Sometime pretty soon after I stopped Brian joined us and things really started to develop. Lawrence said the trail had felt very patriotic to him and I brought up my feelings on how far we are lost as a people from the American spirit. Lawrence said that that spirit is good to be lost. People can live without a why, and the US was founded on slavery anyway. "I don't think the bad negates the good." I brought up Rome's slavery and empire but I said how every bit of it was worth it for the writing of the Aeneid. "So yes, they were bad, but they were so good. God, they were so good." He said culture wasn't necessary for life. I vehemently disagreed, using the metaphor that yes you need to watch the trail to see where you're going (how), but you're only doing it anyway because of that mountain on the horizon (why). I think that Blake Clark could hike the trail without ever needing/wanting to look up, but I think he's the only one.

I also mentioned how sad I have been to leave home and Brian mentioned the Hero's journey. Brilliant. He asked if I had met my guide. Not yet. "That's the next step." He told us all about how when he was 23 he felt a calling to go run Ultra-Marathons in Alberta, but he was from Nova Scotia. He hitchhiked his way there and along the way he got a ride from an old man whose son moved to Alberta at 23 and died of a drug overdose. The man gave to Brian the speech he always wished he had given to his son.

Brian wound up getting into massage therapy to learn more about muscles and he met a massage therapist that was also a renowned Ultra Marathon runner and he worked as their apprentice for some time. So cool.

I had a dream last night where I was led by a group of naked women to a mountaintop.

One was jealous that I was climbing faster than she was and tried to make me stop by telling me I'd get "mutations." Anyway, at the top was a crumbling arena. I was to fight this beast. It was a fat, grey-skinned torso on four legs. A lot like that character from Monsters Inc. Dessert? Idk. "I don't have a weapon to fight with!" "Yes you do." I found a spear. At first I was headed in an arc around the monster but then I charged it and it was pretty easy to kill over-all. I dreamt later that I was telling Stuart about it, and how I thought the thing I had defeated was my old self. Very interesting night.

April 11, 2019

New pen. Old one wore out. I took to hiking immediately after waking and writing about the 9th's conversation on the 10th. I had slept next to Sunkist in a circle of stones at a campsite in a big old valley at the feet of Baden Powell. We took off and did some well paced steep hiking up and up into the cold, But first Before too long I heard a rattle to the right just behind. Pink Floyd and I turned to see a rattler standing himself up using his bottom half kind of like a bourgeois fancy wire lamp or something. I hate how thick the writing with this pen is. Ugh. But I wasn't really all that afraid of the guy because I had already seen one that previous day. The snake was looking at me with anger, but not with malice. We were equals there, each of us perhaps capable, but afraid neither wanting to strike. "Don't make me!" We walked around him.

The higher we climbed the more the desert unrolled across the horizon. South west. In the distance I saw a face for 300 miles familiar. San Jacinto solemn and alone. Blew my mind. You could just look and trace the route of the trail out across the implied valley and in at the beginning of the San Gorgonio mountains, and spit out from the Deep Creek Canyon.

But anyway Sunkist and I took a break when we found Rocket Man lie-ing up on a high, barren ridge. I ate a peanut butter and honey and two raisins before we left and cowboy joined us and evidently he's done DMT so wild. But anyway we hiked on through cold and wind and took another break by a cliff.

Cowboy and I decided to go that day down the Acorn Trail to Wrightwood rather than camp six miles further in the cold with no shower. The trail was tough, and it's going to be a whole lot worse whenever I finally leave this place and have to go back up. Plus, I'm going to be six miles behind everybody with me now. None of whom did I expect to stay with, by the way.

Cowboy and I came into town yesterday late into the afternoon and in the time of dusk. We

I'm writing it. Wow ... "Pen ... ing ... my"

stopped at this church where we'd expected to stay the night because Lawrence and Lisa were going to stay there for $10 a night based on a Guthooks comment. We show up and there's about 30-40 kids running around the place and we're there all hiker-trashy asking teachers about room and board. We were essentially told to GTFO ASAP. So we went on to a bar called Yodeler's and I tried to order a West Coast IPA but the woman asked if I had my ID to show her, and I had to get wry and ask for water.

But after that we'd called a place we heard put hikers up for $25 a night, they'd picked us up, and we were exploding into the place. Something felt off about the place. It was very sharp. Like hard times necessitated intense care and appeasement. I felt pretty uncomfortable the whole time, though I did make tea and relax some. Cowboy's not so good for conversation 1 on 1. He also seemed like he was trying to appease me. The whole vibe was odd, but I did shower. I also slept pretty well and had a good dream about all the cousins meeting up in a fancy city with a lake where a guy could swim with dolphins or seals or something. Anyway, the parents (Pat, Cindy, Dad (but now that I think of it it may have just been Pat)) left and I asked the cousins if anybody wanted to smoke. We all got high, or maybe we were about to when I woke up.

I woke up in the darkness around 3:30 and I was feeling sick. I managed to shit and managed not to throw up but I got in my sleeping bag on the shag couch and everything was fine.

That morning Happy Cowboy and I went to get breakfast at the Grizzly Cafe. We met some old trail friends of his named Oberon, Big (?), and Lucky Cunt. They were all international. Oberon and ~~Big~~ British and Bit Danish. They were alright and so was breakfast. Still prevailing "" discomfort. We got resupplied and went back to the place. I was in a pretty bummed mood. Uncomfortable. I got a call from Sunkist. She had decided to come down the mountain into town because she was alone and had just heard about some dude (saved by Coachmaster) who slipped 300 ft and broke his ankle. She had got together a ~~mystery-o~~ trail angel's place for sleepin'. I told Cowboy but he wasn't moving anywhere so I walked out onto the highway town-bound listening to Filoxiny by Skinshape, whose music I had heard on Morgan Bass' Snapchat story. I was moody, the day was gray, and the music was introspective. I was told that the trail angel was going to be at the Hardware store at 3pm ~~and~~ but It was 2:50 and I still had a mile to walk. Sunkist

said, "Dude, why isn't your thumb out?" Good point. I grabbed the first car to come by, the guy had three adorable dogs, and he got me there at 3:04. I was alone though, so I ~~sent~~ called Sunkist and sat down by the building to wait. I hadn't been there long before who shows up but Gage and Joe. After that, hikers trash started coming out the woodwork. I met the ever-discussed among recently met mouths*, some dude, and then Crunchmaster showed up. It was nice to see literally everyone. I bought a headlamp from the Hardware store, Sunkist showed up with free food, and then the trail angel arrived and Gage, Joe, Sunkist, and I hopped in.

*Rabbit

Lynn's the name of the trail angel. He's got a big white beard and was wearing a death star shirt that said "That's no moon" in French on it. He drove us to his place which is a little cramped with clutter but is very nice. So much nicer than the hostel and I get to stay here for free, with friends. So dope. He gave us some to drink, we showered, they've washed our clothes, and Joe, Sunkist, and I went out to get ingredients for a Dinner Lynn would cook. His wife came by too, before long. She may even be the bigger angel, if we're comparing. Though I guess we shouldn't. But anyway, she stopped by for just a minute and then popped back off for work as an in-house caretaker for the elderly. But we loved the burgers Lynn made (and earlier he had baked homemade brownies from a recipe his mom who is also featured through the display of a drawing of four people in sleeping bags above the fireplace in his house created that were delicious) and drank on and civilly discussed global and national politics. But then Mailey came back and Lynn took her place and we had packed up to smoke but before we did She took us into her bedroom and opened a backlit cabinet and showed us her small weed plant farm of 12 plants or so, I believe. She also let us smoke her last year's crop, stored in an enormous glass jug. It was so good tasting. Like smoking incense. We all lost sense and the wonderful Saint Woman Mailey took to telling stories and cleaning our feet. She was so fantastic about the whole bit. About everything. So was Lynn. He came back, she went back, and we watched a movie recommended by He also called the National about baseball that only just recently ended and entrusted its beautiful finale to me alone (as the others fell asleep) and now it's two or three in the morning and I have to use the restroom & go to bed.

April 13, 2019

Spent all of yesterday in town and in fact, I'm still here now. Yesterday was good. First thing in the morning we went to the ~~Grump~~ Grizzly Cafe again and this time

I liked it even better. I had chorizo, hashbrowns, two pancakes, and tea. After breakfast Joe and I went to a coffee shop called the grind with a cool ski-lodge look and they didn't charge me for my cider because I'm PCT. So kind. Joe and I sat up on a balcony and read for a long time. It was good reading too. Bloom putting himself on trial for sexuality. But after reading we went and bought sandwich materials for lunch and everything we got was so awesome. I think my final sandwich product consisted of avocado, hummus, tomatoes, pickles, tuna + rice, lettuce, and pretzels all on a French Bread that we got from a local bakery where I saw Billy Goat Queen (BGQ). Fantastic. Joe also bought Heineken and it was good. After eating we smoked and watched as much of A Quiet Place as we could before Lynn and Mailly came back and they had a wounded hiker and the old man that Mailly was taking care of. Dude said clouds were bitchin'. You right. But anyway we spent the evening pretty high, Lynn made pizza and I just kept eating it. I ate so much. So good. Then sleeps, and here I am. It's 6:37 AM and I'm aiming to leave soon. Let's go, baby!

April 14, 2019

"Today has required the most determination of any day on the trail so far," I thought to myself yesterday around 11:30 AM. I had just come out of Wrightwood over the very steep Acorn trail with a very full pack and rested-too-long legs. I was listening at last to Mac Demarco, whose style I officially enjoy, but it didn't really distract from the fatigue. I had no idea then just how much more determination I would need in the coming hours.

The day really began around 2 when I showed up at a parking lot right below Baden Powell. I saw Lawrence + Lisa there with a whole bunch of dudes I didn't know. They had flip-flopped and were coming south and had just been over the mountain. They were telling everybody not to go up. I sat a while. I didn't want to put myself at less risk, but I had finally been picking up a good stride and to sacrifice that much energy + momentum was unbearable. Nervously I decided I had to go see the snow conditions for myself or I'd be disappointed. Pretty soon I realized those dudes were full of shit and it was a totally safe (though difficult) ascent

I made it up past the treeline to this awesome snow covered ridge that ran to the summit. I was so terrified of being up there but it was also beautiful. I wanted to check out the views and I did but while I did I would become more aware of the dangerous conditions. I summitted and met a cute and timid orange golden retriever. Didn't stay long because it was already 4 and I still had six miles to camp. I did not make it before sunset.

I set off down the foot-marked trail along the ridge and it was slow going. I had thought we'd be going downhill. Generally we were, but every so often would be a huge huge lump on the ridge we'd have to climb all the way up and slip too down further. Every one I climbed I thought would be the last one. So frustrating.

I had been praying for the last descent for ages but when I got it I was terrified. There was a huge slope and no well marked descent. By then it was dark and the ice had begun to re-freeze but not enough to give me any kind of confidence. Terrifying. Finally around 8 pm I made it to the first water source ~~since~~ since Wrightwood at Little Jimmy Spring and then made it around a bend where I saw headlamps and heard Joe cough.

Cooked quickly (put pretzels in the dinner) and sat at the fire in my sleeping bag for ~~a~~ 3 joints worth of smoke and then went to bed.

Now I'm taking a lunch break and we've been road-walking most of the day. With this dude I met last night named Tony who is also British. He's alright, but there's something "I am very badass" about him. We're also on an alternate route and all I really want to is to be back on the official trail for several long and snowless days. I had some really exhausted moments yesterday, but such things must happen from time to time.

I saw LA in the distance below us last night. I couldn't see it during the day due to fog, but last night I got to see it light up. Very beautiful.

Same day, later

I feel a whole lot better than I did earlier today. I was feeling disenfranchised. My whole positive, beauty-craving matrix was shifting out of my focus. I felt like I could feel myself switching outlooks and feeling lost again. But I fixed it. Plus, I might be seeing Sunkist tomorrow. Things would make a little more sense

if I did, I think. It seems like everybody around me is traveling so much faster than me now. Rocket Man and Gage and Coffee Cast from Israel I'm camped with right now. I think all of them have made forays into 30 mile days and Coffee Cast started the 27th. Joe has passed me. For good perhaps. This is my first time being the slow one. Very interesting feeling. With Sunshirt, things might resume at their old pace. Or maybe I'll blast out a million miles tomorrow. I am in a really good mood. Mile 400 today. Very interesting feelings. I am excited to see how tomorrow goes. I think I'm gonna listen to Filosing tonight, Hyped. Drank the green tea tonight. Super glad I did, it was delicious. Also the PB+J tortillas are turning out great. I saw Crunchmaster today and he said he'd never seen anyone pack out jam before.

I felt really guilty for skipping Williamson today because Gage did it. Rocket Man said it's not even an issue though so shoutout to him. Found a blue warm hat (beanie) with a pom on trail today. Score. The trail provides.

April 15, 2019

Whale of a day today. I woke up before daylight this morning and began to prepare for the day. Gage, on my ~~right~~ left behind the picnic table, was also getting ready. Rocket-man and Coffee Cast were to my ~~left~~ right sleeping. We were really cold that morning by the stream. ~~So~~ I saw my water had frozen. I am glad though, because even if it had been very cold last night, I didn't notice. Probably thanks to the hat I found yesterday.

But anyways I was off and going and I saw Joe tearing down camp. I brushed my teeth there and headed on. I listened to that album by the Talking Heads that has "Once in a Lifetime" on it. So so good. I found this great flat circle campground around 9:30 and I sat down in the middle to smoke and observe the Mojave Desert before me. It was totally flat except for these random hills that popped up. There were also poppy patches, and what looked like sand.

Joe came by and we smoked my pipe. I got a good running clarity

and watched the water behind as I smoked my bowl. Joe and I decided to hike together and we wound up doing so all day. We came down from that mountain down a ridge across a highway, and then Joe and I powered up a really challenging slope. But after we did that a while, we ran into a good group talking together on trail. It was a girl from Colorado named Claire, and a girl from Italy called Elizabeth, and then Sage and Tony. Both girls are really cool and Elizabeth is from Milan and has a pretty stylish shirt that's got cups of tea or something on it and she is quitting medical school and is looking for her path out here. Claire is doing a gap year before college and lives in Durango where there was that fire last summer that prevented George and I from going through there and she almost lost her house in it.

But anyway we hiked along, and then along along along, and just before we finished the day at 29.5 miles, there was this crazy windy windy saddle where you could see some really wrinkled hills in the distance. Also there was a steep slope in the super wind just after that. Now I'm at camp dodging wind in a dell beneath a Ranger Station high on Joe's word, my Gorilla glue, and good times. It's very blue ~~and as~~ in the moonlight as I smoked my pipe red in the teal grass and the black trees.

April 17, 2019

Yesterday was fantastic. Joe and I woke up and got started from the ranger station thinking 18 miles to Agua Dulce. More of a chore than anything! Turned out to be wonderful. I started out alone and the valley was full of mist in the morning. You couldn't see anything behind the trail but faintly swirling white. Eventually the valley began to reveal itself through tufted cotton. Lush, green and yellow ridges and hills. We went down one such ridge from the station down to a highway and shallow stream, then we started up the other side.

The other side was a low hill-land sporting enormous brown stones like the spine of the mountain raised up through wind-swept tall grasses. Not to mention the flowers (poppies, yellow ones, purple, sometimes, red) wavering in and out of view behind the shimmering grass. On the trail they were rampant. So much grass I couldn't even use my trekking poles most times because the grass would grab at it. Grass, Grass, Grass. ~~But~~ hills

Anyway, we rounded the ~~hills~~ hills ~~hills~~ and came about a highway way

up high. We were led ~~by~~ a right to the bottom of it and through a drainage tunnel. Such a cool tunnel. On the other side Joe and I smoked because
* Rocks — it looked like we were about to enter this spot marked on Guthooks that I had only just heard of that day called Vasquez* County Park. I had never heard of the Vasquez Rocks. I had no idea what was about to happen.

Beautiful, beautiful rocks. We walked through a river canyon bordered very harshly by jutting, tall, horizontally wavingly lined, stones.
·Canyon — The ~~[illegible]~~ wound always around corners and every one we turned showed me some new fantastic wonder ~~the~~ in the form of the land. The grass was green when the ~~sto~~ sun slowed down and it would sweep in the wind that blew against my ~~shirt~~ chest and ruffled ~~the~~ my shirt. We ~~[illegible]~~

As we left the rocks Joe and I walked along fields of yellow flowers and it didn't take long before we had arrived in Agua Dulce. Though I did just remember a brief snake encounter along the way that scared the shit out of Joe. He almost stepped on it and evidently it was the first snake he'd ever seen. Britain.

But as soon as we got into town Joe bought beer (Heineken) and I bought Ben + Jerry's and we sat at a table outside the store until we finished our pints and Tony showed up to lead us to Hikers Heaven.

Agua Dulce is a town that embraces its roots. Everything here reminds of the
or maybe 1890's — 1850's California Ranch. We walked a long ~~the~~ country road ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ lined on either side by sprawling California-style oaks. There are low but sharp mountains in the distance.

We arrived at Hikers Heaven.

The property is huge. They've got something like 4 dogs, hens and roosters, ~~[illegible]~~ horses, and even hikers. There's a cactus garden featuring the Saguaros which I had wanted to see but expected to miss. Joe and I smoked and drank a [illegible] upon arrival. We just got to work. After the noon ~~we~~ ~~walked~~ I showered in the retired mobile home (this in itself is more of an individual activity) and it was so warm and I loved the water pressure. After that I [illegible] with Joe to get Mexican food in town. We went to a spot called Maria Bonita. Ridiculous portions. and Joe got Nachos with his burrito so he needed assistance there

too and I was so full but I kept eating. We walked with cannonball stomachs into the grocery after paying and I got some Deluxe Beans for unnecessary dessert and we walked back in the 9:00

Same day, 10:40pm

The moonlight was what I was going to describe. Cruel trick of fate that the light required for the writing emits one from the alien light of the moon. A dirt surface on a hill here makes a man feel isolated and in another world.

I just stayed around Hiker Heaven all day. Felt really cool wearing my grey blazer, green shirt, and red pants on loan from Double H.

Noah was here, and actually he's what left my pen dissatisfied. He walked up and asked "Do you journal?" I armed up my typical response, looked up, and we had a fantastic high five. He, Crunch, and I went to the Mexican place for lunch and Rabbit and the "Men of the North" (Big, LC, Oberon (who gave me like 3 grams of weed for free)) were eating with us but this time I got fried ice cream dessert. I have been smoking most of the day. Just complimented the outfit so well. After lunch we went to the grocer right by and I got avocados, french bread, and tuna for a sandwich. Sometime after the sandwich everybody got in a van for Payless Food Mart. Rabbit sat right next to me and I guess it's been too long because we were crammed in and she had her leg against mine and it was hot. Ride back same deal.

But anyway I got a huge resupply. Maybe too big. We will see. More smoking and drinking upon our return. Lots of eating, too. Everybody got too much food. But I played this really dope jam with the Am to E and everyone must have heard it because they were quiet and I was loud at one point. Aaaaah. It came out flawless. Love having guitars around.

But anyway, good night!

April 20, 2019 (Smoke weed everyday)

Well the day after last writing I went out with Joe from Hiker Heaven with the intent of matching a hit to every beer he drank as he was doing the 24 challenge where you do the 24 miles to Casa de Luna and drink 24 beers and do it in 24 hours. Also the hottest day on trail thus far. Also we didn't start until 9 AM. And also the trail was really tough for all that. And also our packs are enormous. It didn't go super well. The terrain was beautiful. Verdant hills all around

A dirt road upon a ridge led down to a shimmering reservoir in the distance. The trail began to descend. I was chilling under this tree taking a shit when this Irish couple that ought to have been behind Joe showed up. They were pretty blasé about it. "He's just drunk and taken a wrong turn." I was feeling nervous and guilty for the rest of the day a while. Was it my fault for not staying with him? What if he dies will they make me a suspect?

I was really hot and I took a nap from 4-5 or something under the shade of a bush. The Irish couple woke me up and poked fun at me for claiming I'd make it to Casa de Luna that day. Fair enough. I felt pretty excellent, though. I hiked on until it got dark and I was only 2 miles from ~~Francisquito~~ San Francisquito road ~~best~~ and I just decided to plane it in there. It was a cool spot where I could relax in the shelter of a large rock outcropping. Or maybe grotto is better. "in the shelter of a craggy grotto." Yeah.

I woke up the next morning (~~this morning~~) (yesterday morning) and it was so peaceful. I felt no obligation to rise being only 2 miles from my destination and I luxuriously laid in the bag. Eventually the bugs got too annoying and I had to get out of there. Took a shit by the road and started to hoof it. I was walking but trying to hitch at the same time so I got really good at this backward amble while facing traffic with my thumb out. Felt very James Dean. But eventually one guy in a truck pulled over and past his dog he uttered that golden phrase whose tones I had been so long desperate to hear: "Just get in the back, there."

I was sitting in the back with the wind in my hair and he paraded me past hikers headed out and they all knew him and before I knew it we were there. At this house in a fairly neighborhood with a couch set up in the driveway and a banner that said 2019 and you would sign it and somebody drew the Notre Dame cathedral burning on it.

But yeah I quickly went and got my hawaiian shirt & I went with an oversized black one unbuttoned down to the lower abs and just wandered about Joe until other people showed up. Also I had pancakes.

But other people did show up. Gazer was already there and then Crunch, the ~~Bride~~ "Men of the North", eventually Claire & Elizabeth. We got a really

good crew going and we just shared chats all day basically. Oscar the Aussie is here too, and I found him alone for a period today reading Fear & Loathing in the hammock area. Inspired, I sat in one adjacent and read Ulysses. Really good today. He's in the whorehouse hallucinating the presence of his great grandpa as a dog. But anyway, eventually Oscar and I talked about Fear & Loathing and I argued its Spirituality and then he and I talked Creative Practicality as a result of conscientiousness + self confidence. That conversational circle got bigger until it was everyone because most people had left the driveway to avoid the ramblings of a random crazy Russian guy. Jizzel neighbors. "My neighbor is a rattlesnake." - Joe, taking the piss out of that dude.

I learned a lot about Claire today. First of all, she's my age. Second of all, she went to a boarding school like Choate that Gus went to. She described it so beautifully. Like an academic paradise of scholars passionate scholars. She said that the college she's going to, Colorado College, has a lot of the aforementioned as well. Hmm.

But anyway I went to go volunteer and prepare the food with Rabbit and she suggested her alma mater Western Washington University and she majored in Speech Pathology where you have to help people learn to talk. But yeah I did the beans and she did the cheese. Minor rivalry, I'd say, but dinner turned out splendid. I sat with Claire afterwards in the corner of the couch with my blanket and then I had to get up as it was getting late to grab my pipe etc. When I grabbed my pack and turned it over a papier mache skull fell out of my hat. Claire & Elizabeth were laughing as I left so I knew I needed somehow to retort. I put the skull prop in my hat and put both on my head with the chin strap on my chin to keep it tight. Then, I positioned my shirt collar up at the top of my head, affixing it with my new PCT bandana that I earned by dancing with Jerry to uptown funk. But anyway I walked up to the crew and everybody loved it. Craning their necks to see my set up there. Evidently it was pretty good, but most people were incredulous rather than laughing. But they said it was cool so ???

These two instagram famous PCT hikers came by. One is Torch and the other is Air-something. Claire was so excited. It was a bit much. But they got there and I was getting tired so I got up to go but then Air-dude was like "yeah I started March 7 last year." "March 7th is my birthday." "No way! Want a joint?" I stayed talking out there smoking and talking and listening and Air-something told this beautiful story about his PCT yo-yo there on the way SOBO he just kept revisiting

alone nights he had cherished shared and replaying those moments in his head. Very poignant and sad.

But anyway I made a good joke that everyone took pretty interestingly. Ais something said something about providing sunlight and ~~th~~ I said "no This is Casa de Luna, we are not worried about sunlight." Ais-S was like "Deep" and everyone just basked in it. I had thought it was clever but deep was surprising. Still proud of it.

All through the night Claire had been loosening up. I had thought she was something of a teetotaler but she drank when Twerk brought beer and smoked when he brought weed. It wasn't a dangerous thing, though I was concerned because Twerk and Ais-S are gay and together (?). But as she did she laid down against me and into my arms and we held hands, ~~as she felt my~~ her body enclosed in my arms and chest. Very nice. Now in bed in the Magic M-tree forest of a million tentsites. Gonna paint a rock ~~tomorrow~~ today and maybe do an that edible for 4/20.

April 21, 2019

Yesterday was awesome. We smoked a lot and drank a lot and generally just had a good time. But first, in the morning was pancakes. I had like eight. After that we chatted with this Australian woman called Stiffy (her name is Steph) and she had this super interesting argumentative conversational style. It's kind of like the British but a whole lot more intense. I also played guitar quite a bit. Came up with a cool chord progression of ~~F#~~ to A, D, then a few two string chords on A, E and B.

also painted a rock I'm really proud of. At first I was getting nowhere but I got a second rock and Bob Ross'd the fuck out of it. Purple mountains at sunrise. Now they have a place in the Manzita forest. Manzanita I found out that they that type of tree I've been wondering about is the Coastal Live Oak! There was a rock on one.

But anyway also yesterday Claire led me back deep in the manzanita and we made out a while. Very interesting. Not necessarily the most attractive make out (she's inexperienced) but it was alright. We dry humped, but that's just so childish. I don't know. She really clung to me. It was pretty interesting. I felt paternal.

My outfit was cool yesterday. I was wearing my Melly under the Hawaiian shirt (thanks Rocket Man) and with my headband on I felt like a Jedi.

I took a blanket off the couch and CoffeeCart was under another blanket and he pp popped out and later I was talking about it and made the joke; "It was like I hiked the wrong car and Oscar the Grouch came out." The Aussie woman loved it and it was generally appreciated by all.

April 21, 2019

Casa de Luna was just such a dope experience. This morning I woke up where I camped (with the tarp up as per (Claire's apparently needless warning) and got some pancakes fresh off the cooker. Before I had even packed my stuff though, Airborne came back into the forest to say bye and he gave me a gram and a half or so of weed, I bought earlier and I think I have like six strains. If only the boys could see me now, I've been meaning to call them. I really just want to say what's up. But I really like Airborne. He was funny and super supportive (though I had to endure some joshing). But evidently Casa de Luna is named so because typically upon arriving you've been hiking for a month and I did spend my month anniversary there.

So woohoo! But, we had to leave. Terry was kind enough to give us a ride back to the trailhead and no shit as she was just about to pull out another car arrived carrying Gasper + Sunburst. Sunburst ran up and hugged me and Gasper promised to tell me all about Cardella, but later. It was time for me to go.

As she drove us back the mountains rippled. We got to the trail, gave hugs to the wonderful Terry, and went on our way. I wound up donating $15 which is $5 more than Hikers Heaven but I just felt like Casa de Luna was so perfect in every way. She really deserved much more. But today I have been hiking with Claire all day. She and Elizabeth (Snoop), but I saw much more of Claire. I was really kind of in a mood about hiking with her. I felt like she might think too much about what happened. But I managed by the afternoon to tell her that I still felt that my future had something in store for me and so that I didn't know how things would be so don't get too excited, sorry.

She understood and it helps that I didn't say it quite so much like like an asshole. But I have enjoyed being with her so much more for saying that. I'm really glad I did. We're camped together (all 3) now just three or so miles past 500.

There were these great mountains that were shades of light purple in the sunset and Claire said, "It looks like your sock." Fuck yeah Claire. She and Snoop are journaling right now, too. We're having an individual history pow-wow.
Snoop's tent keeps falling down. Claire seems to remember events at Casa de Luna more specifically. She wrote about Daniel, the dude who kept us trying to guess his name for 30 minutes (Rumplestiltskin!), and probably Rasper Bob-tay who came up while I was playing guitar on the patio (remember when you were there and the dog was watching a squirrel on the road? It was that big golden retriever named Joe) and told me he was there to listen as a preamble.
Good times & Good night!

April 23, 2019 1:08 AM
What a fucking day yesterday was. And by extension, today. I woke up with Snoop & Claire and it was cold as fuck. Not really as fuck actually, but cold.
At first Claire and I were hiking together but thankfully she decided to hang back and call her Mom. I was really craving the solitude. The hike reminded me a ton of home. Specifically Joe Crowson. Small green clovers at the foot of the oaks. Gentle morning light. I took a break by a stream in a super green valley that was a bitch and a half to get back out of.
But I did and back on down the mountain.
I'd managed to get ahead of the girls around 11:00 and I was looking out from some of the foothills at the flower beds at the beginning of the valley floor. It was an area that I believe Guthooks called Cow Spring Canyon.
Tons of flowers. After minimal deliberation I decided to hike off trail down a ridgeline to walk amongst the flowers. Felt like an ant leaving away from the primary highway. But it was cool. Amongst poppies primarily. Eventually I just wanted trail so I got back in time for this really cool fence in stretch through flowers as well to the highway. There was a sign that said Stay on trail. Lemtows out. Oops. ~~[illegible]~~
But there across the highway was Hikers Town. Everybody was there & Skitters Joe & the Men of the North etc. Coffee Cart gave me a beer and a slice of pizza. Eventually we went to the cafe in this really old and beat ass van with Claire, Snoop, Rabbit driving, Lucky Cent, and Coffee Cart, and Flucial. I was able on

to buy a six pack without being carded (love the middle of nowhere) and we spent around half an hour watching Fast and the Furious Tokyo Drift. It was so bad. We made plenty of fun of it.

Driving back from HT I drove but nobody trusted me as the driver because they thought I was high on account of a couple hits like an hour before. Ugh. But I loved the driving. Me in a strange dilapidated van with random strangers skittering across the valley floor. Really cool views too.

We arrived. Perfectly fine. Ugh.

But anyway around 7:30 or so we left to night hike along the LA aqueduct –Oh but before that Gapos showed up and talked about Coachella and it sounded dope– But yeah the aqueduct was really cool as the sun threw pink and purple from the valley rim onto the clouds. Also I saw Joshua trees (real ones) blooming and I had heard you can eat the flowers so I did. Kind of tasted like nuts.

But the sun finally set completely and we saw a minor meteor shower. There was this one long one in particular that went across most of the sky. So orange and cool.

For a long time the night hiking was really exhilarating and we took a break and I made tea and it was awesome – but after a few Before too long had passed though we took this bad detour and lost a lot of ground for time and when we got back on trail Lucky and I just pounded out these last few miles to the water source (catching Oleson + Big) and are now ready for bed.

We're camped amongst these windmills that make a soft mechanical lull and glow red on the rotating fins on at some interval. Very beautiful & surreal.

Friday April 24, 2014

Looks like water somehow managed to stain the journal. Super annoying. But anyway, Yesterday we woke up with the windmills. I was first up and I saw somebody walking down the road past us. I slept for a little longer (still first up) and it was really peaceful eating breakfast.

The walking in the morning was nice as well. Green and color stained hills (purple) and the occasional Joshua Tree. We & I met up with the stranger and it was Toogam. Nice to see her a bit. We sat under the brush and chatted until Lucky caught up too and around then I headed on. We did a bit of a climb that really kicked my ass for no reason. The day

hadn't quite reached full temperature but it was still pretty warm and I was pretty tired from the night before.

Made it over to this small stream where we filled on water. The taste was something awful but the trail forecast said no water 'til Tehachapi so we had to make due. It was my first full capacity carry ~~stor~~ for probably 4 weeks and at first, it didn't bother me. We were only climbing gradually after all. Until the canyon. The trail had taken us to the crest of a hill and asked us nicely to go all the way down into a barren canyon then immediately back up an even steeper and taller hill. We were doing the switchbacks down and Lucky pointed out a sand slide down that looked convenient. I didn't really want to skip the trail plus it was steep as fuck. The sun got higher and we did another round on the switchbacks. ~~Ff~~ We took the chute down. Really fun, like skiing but in 90°F heat and at the end we had sand in our shoes.

There was a couple camped in that canyon. I have no idea why. The place was ugly and Martian as all hell and it was 11 o'clock but they told us about a rumour of treasure laid up trail: oranges. We still had 4 miles till but Lucky and I were not daunted.

After 10 more minutes we were daunted. That climb was brutal and it didn't stop being brutal once for that entire 4 mile stretch. You could see Baden Powell across the Mojave but ~~the~~ I didn't give a fuck. I just wanted to be done with that goddamn hill. Having summitted I was walking and stopping every 300 feet. Took forever to finally crash into that trail magic Oasis. Umbrellas, apples, oranges, a pineapple, ants, everywhere. I entered through the gates of Olympus and the gift of ambrosia ~~fftt~~ shot golden fire through my mouth.

April 25, 2019

The fruit was really good and Lucky and I stayed there like 3 and a half hours and Coffee Cart passed us and so did Stiffy. We eventually got going again in the evening at 5 and my morale was pretty low because I was worried about the Sierra & $ & gear but I think it was really just because the scenery was so barren because as soon as I got down onto the wet side of the mountains and the green grass fell to gnashing cow ~~moo~~ molars and the land fell into a ~~wet~~ valley. Beautiful spot and the sky was tinted pink.

We arrived at this road that was eight miles before where we had been planning to stop and Stiffy was camping there trying to convince us to stay and she did make a good argument but we were determined to keep hiking. We could not be deterred.

We walked over a small rise and 100 feet away was a hiker by the road headlamp clad. I walked over out of curiosity. It was Coffee Cast. He said he had just called a trail angel to take him to Tehachapi. "No, we should keep hiking." The van pulled up. "No, no, we don't need a—" "~~Come on~~" "Showers" We got in.

Met a ton of international people at the woman's house. Her name is Brenda and she has this fantastic view of the town in the valley below a big ol' green mountain. But at the time I could only see the shimmering lights over before a wavy silhouette. She's got with horses that she's adopted but I wouldn't see them until morning, either. The people who were already here, a German dude named Sleeper and an Israeli dude whose name I don't think I got made making dinner for us. It was awesome. Got a rotisserie Chicken and I had a tub of Rocky Road and a baguette, too. Showered. Super nice. Slept in the basement.

Woke up and somebody made breakfast. Boy arrived and then so did everyone else. The basement is a fucking mess right now. But I had some awesome dreams that night. One about fighting progressively more dangerous threats (ending at an enormous dragon and having risen through aliens + terrorists along the way) and a dream about scuba diving in a pool with tropical fish.

Anyway, everybody arrived and all I really remember aside from that is the German Bakery. We got a ride there from one of the dudes that's been here a million years and I got a baguette w/ turkey etc. Super good. Coffee Cast got ~~a~~ pie so I got ice cream and we had a nice dessert. I got to see some of the town and the place is super Route 66. Like some tiny highway town. I mean that's what it actually is. Just preserved.

But after the bakery we came on back to the house and ~~I think we all ate~~ slowly the hot tub began to creep its way into conversation. Always in secret tones everybody talked about it. Something like 10 people were probably in there at its maximum point. I sat on the porch and watched the horses run and thought about the view over my pipe. I came back to the hot tub after sunset and soaked alone and eventually abandoned the waters for a pole where I leaned and fairly trapped considering the city lights. I thought something like "Ovid looked out over the Roma and saw

was try to imitate the stars." Kind of cool, anyway. ~~I thought also about~~ it. I was listening to the Dead and the album had this awesome version of the Other One but it had no lyrics unfortunately. I also listened to Standing on the Moon. Good shit.

When I came back in Lucky was packing away leftovers from his pasta dinner. He gave me a huge dish/bowl of salad and I equaled it with pasta and made a pan of tea and ate and drank it all during Game of Thrones season 8 episode 2(?) the one before the big battle against the dead people. In Brenda's home theater. So dope. Joe and I slept outside because inside was way too crowded.

Today has been the most boring day on trail. I haven't felt anything strongly all day. I think we're going to town at ~~3~~ 5 but it's 3:30 and I'm getting antsy. What I really want is to ride a bike. The house is so far from town it's not super easy to get out in. A bike would just be so perfect for this area.

April 26, 2019

New pen. Gotta learn to use her, but I think I like what I see her already. Yesterday evening wound up fantastic. Pretty soon after writing I fell asleep on a wavy couch in the living room and I really loved that nap. Felt instantly so much better. We got in the car and rolled on down to the supermarket to resupply. I was so hyped. I got couscous and spices and shit. We're getting more culinary, baby. Buut, yeah I also got a pineapple & red bananas. We went next door to Baskin Robbins and we impressed them. They hadn't ~~heard~~ even heard of the trail and I got to introduce the fact that everyone I was with aside from Claire was foreign.

"Where are you all from?"

"He's from Israel, He's from Germany, she's from Italy, they're from France, and she's from Colorado."

It was just a fucking Baskin Robbins. Fuuu. But we went around back to the house and as it got dark Claire and I made out in the hot tub. Really not loving this day bumping. But still it was alright. Then the folks at six flags returned and we had s'mores. I loved how enthusiastic ~~she~~ Elizabeth was about them. She just loves s'mores. Cowboy, Joe, Oleron, Claire, and I told ghost stories & that was excellent. TALLY POOOP! But ~~good~~ yeah I had a good night. Today has been even better.

I woke up around 8:30 and ate cereal for breakfast and the best of the day

was reclining in the morning ~~sun~~ sun tanning smoking, eating my pineapple, drinking a Pacifico (from the pineapple), and listening to Sublime. So nice. Great times. Then at noon we all assembled for a visit to town and I went to the coffee shop and read. I ordered a turkey wrap and Italian soda. There was a really good section in Ulysses today. Still doing the play, but there was this section about the times of day dancing across a stage and it was so ~~aw~~ awesome. Also Stephen was the drunken hero of Ireland. Very cool.

I was getting really tired and Joe called and invited me to smoke then for ten minutes or so before the movie. We found a big old field and sat under a tree and smoked. Went to catch the movie and I literally ran into Rocket Man in the dark. We saw Avengers Endgame and I totally loved it. So many fantastic moments. But then I briefly saw Gage's and got a ride back here where I drank some beer and ate this delicious taco dinner and talked with the group, which now seems ready to enter the Sierra together.

Moving for trail early tomorrow, all packed up. Reading at the coffee shop felt so nice. Like I was back at home. If I hadn't been ~~wasn't~~ wearing short shorts I'd have felt like a normal person.

April 27, 2019

Woke up this morning to my alarm. Felt like a dick because I coughed so much in the night that I'm sure I pissed everyone off and then the alarm was the icing on the cake. I apologized for the alarm to Joe but he said he didn't hear it. I also felt like I was rushing Big out of there. Everybody had wanted to leave at like 6:30 (even him) but then nobody but me was ready. Didn't really matter though because we didn't even get on trail until around 10. Worth it though because we had breakfast burritos which were delicious and then Brenda (Pink) drove us. I was out like a shot, man. I had to do 8 miles to get to where Gage & Claire were starting. But man my Achilles were just way out of line. Fucking ridiculous. Getting upset over bunny hills. Eventually they listened the fuck up and I passed over the highway and began to climb the mountain.

Got tired though and took a break in the rare shade of Joshua and I took a super satisfying shit and then like a raging brush fire I marched up the hill. The top was really nice and green in the pine sort of way but they were all low and bushy, and flowers colored the grass. Later in the day I met another 19 year old girl going to school in Colorado. Her name was Princess Leopard (she had leopard print gaiters) and she had been off trail 10 days. We talked for like 2 miles and I found Gage & Heather camped ~~.2 miles~~ .2 miles from the spring. ~~I put my sh~~ First though I had heard their voices. I was like "Oh yeah

I just heard her laugh. Now I really hope she's there or I'll look really fucking crazy." Ah yes. Then I heard more voices. It was Gaper with his friend Naomi just over the rise. "Yooooo!" Then I dropped pack and took a nice evening stroll to the water source. Really nice views of some of the mountains out there. I signed the trail register poking fun at Claire's "rodest kid on trail" remark ("emphasize kid") and then also Sunkist was in there today around 4:20! We should see her tomorrow hopefully. Naomi, Gaper, Gage, Claire, and I all talked this evening. Coffee Cart was here too. The energy was really high, it was awesome. Naomi said I was super similar in some of my mannerisms to a friend of hers from Ojai California. She thought I might be from there as well. Hmmm. Very flattering moment though.

Tried out the couscous ramen. Super good & filling but needs fine tuning. Sour ~~Gu~~ gushers = delicious as fuck. Peace.

April 28, 2019

Today has been good, but it's been damn long. We left camp this morning around 7 (glad to be back on Poptarts) and hit the trail full send and we had been really going for some time when I checked the ~~clock~~ clock and it was only 8:30. There was this really great view of a high cliff with tons of ledges and grass. Cool. But anyways we were hiking so much but we were getting nowhere (Gage felt this as well. also Claire). I think it was because of the water capacity. I was full because there wasn't to be anymore water for like 17 miles from camp and we had a lot of climbing to do. On one hand I felt very efficient because my Crocs wasn't leaking or anything but on the other hand my shoulders hurt.

Eventually, around 10, we finished off the first 10 of the day and took a break in a field under an oak tree. I tried a couple cartwheels but Gage really showed me up - isn't one flawless one. Dude's a leprechaun. Seriously. But yeah Coffee Cart got out his whole coffee apparatus and I made some quick tea for the cough I've had and after more general resting we took off.

Big hill. Too steep. Goddamn Gage is really fast, man. Passed me like it was nothing even after having had a cigarette on break. WTF. But yeah, I struggled up that hill. And then the next one. But there were lots of coastal live oaks and grass and it was really nice most of the day. I was hiking shirtless, too, so that was nice. Feeling more body confident today so nice. But anyway we finally after another

shitty climb (on which we had a nice lunch sans Gage who was lost in the wind) we made it to a water source. It was a spring coming from a PVC pipe into a trough. I took the bandana and swished it around in the water then squeezed it out over my head and just felt so good. It was almost painfully cold but that's what was so nice about it. We hiked on an easy 8 miles more from the water through a ~~suuc~~ suuuper suuuper Colorado-esque valley (pines and rock and streams everywhere) and are now at camp. I was gonna siwash it again tonight but there were many clouds so I'm in Claire's duplex. Feeling good. Hope you are too. 'Night.

april 29, 2014

Today was dope, Kla. But, I suppose I should start with last night. after my entry Claire and I started making out. In ~~Tehachapi~~ Tehachapi she was on her period so I took off my shorts but didn't expect ~~and~~ any more contact than skin to yoga pant. She had just come off it though so we were going to have sex but she is so tight that it literally just didn't work. Hmm. Will take future experimentation. She may be the Ultra-Virgin.

But anyway this morning we woke up to rain. And thunder and lightning. We left camp all together in rain jackets with painfully full water capacity at like 7:30 (?) but I was just getting dripped on all over by that goddamned Vecto and I stopped enough times to fiddle with it that I got pretty far behind. Then I was passed by Max K and that was annoying, too. But the area we walked through was really cool. In the grey cloud light it looked like the Elephant Graveyard from the Lion King. Lots of high crumbling peaks. ~~We~~ We left that area via descent into a drier, more arid valley and came up on a water cache where were Gage, CC, and Claire.

We all hiked on together from there but I started going really ham on this uphill and Gage & CC did too and we lost Claire a bit. I loved that uphill because it just couldn't beat me. I just wouldn't stop coming. It was awesome. But then the weather changed. Hail, out of nowhere. Lightning & thunder. Everybody kind of stressed. Gage & CC arguing. Claire and I put down tents on this random saddle populated mostly by a group of trumpeters and we planned to leave when the rain stopped. It wouldn't ever stop until 4pm. It was no easy rain, either. Pounding on my rain fly. Claire would come in and we'd discuss battle plan in the cramped space. Shouting under the rain. I put on Rainy Day, Dream Away. Nice. Smoked a couple bowls. Made food. Made tea. Packed up my tarp once it dried after the mist

rolled on past the Joshua trees. I am now in Claire's tent and I spent some time reading Ulysses. My tent (tarp) actually fared about as well as hers except for lack of wind cover. Well, ~~on at least~~ just less wind cover in mine. We're gonna try to do the whole 30 ~~into~~ miles into Ridgecrest tomorrow so 5AM morning.

Final note: Weed and tea is this generation's cigarettes & coffee.

April 30, 2014

So much wind last night. Not even Claire's tent could stand up to it. I woke up at some point in the middle of the night because there was plastic over my face. The wire that kept the trekking pole on my side from falling had lost its stake and the trekking pole was down. A humble college dropout such as myself may not be sophisticated enough to mess around with Z-Packs tents (not motivated enough, either), but I devised my own plan. I found that if I slept real close to the pole, the wind couldn't knock it down. I just had to apply some constant pressure. All ~~all~~ night I was Atlas, holding up the plastic roof of our world.

I also had an awesome dream. I was walking (maybe floating) around a Tudor/Gothic college campus with some kind of billowing robe all around me singing. My voice resounded everywhere. Really odd. Also I dreamt about playing one of those little traveler's guitars.

We woke up ~~earo~~ at 5:00 but slept until 5:20 and then began to face the day. Big took some encouragement. Hardtan and I were out ~~to~~ first and it was so cold that we couldn't help but crush miles. We had no choice. Made it to a water cache 9 miles away by 9 having left camp at 6:10. We spent (according to Claire) 50 minutes there because the next bit was supposed to be a pretty tough climb. Supposed to be. Turned out to take nothing, and once we summitted, you could just see above the dark mountains far away the whitecapped Sierra Nevada beckoning us forward. We've been hiking with this dude named Jay the past couple of days who I'm gonna call Locks because of his long blonde dreads and he got up there just after us.

"I'd rather be there than here," he said gesturing to the Sierra, "and I've got the means." He began to hike. Hilarious.

The terrain ~~until~~ until then had been classic desert; sandbrush, J-[illegible], crumbling rocky spires. Claire said she ~~fe~~ felt like she was on the moon but I felt like I was at the bottom of the ocean. Lost in sharp currents of wind.

After the climb though we were in pines / Coastal live oak. Cool stuff. We took lunch at 17 miles and 12:30. I had Tuna that I expected to hate but really enjoyed and it just gave me so much energy. I was grinding out miles like nothing through a (still windy) scrub-brush wasteland when an engine noise began and around a corner this four wheeler drifted and almost ran me the fuck over. People just having a good day but almost scared the shit out of me. Big, Rabbit, Claire and I finally finished the 30 around 5:30pm but it wasn't to balloons. We sat on the highway in crazy winds for 30 minutes before this dude who had ~~at adverts~~ advertised a taxi service could pick us up. As soon as he did he asked if anyone smoked weed and I was like yeah and so it became my job to roll a joint. Crammed in the backseat with no seatbelt on bumping and jostling down the ~~the~~ desert highway with three other people. The strain was Mama's Milk or something and that shit was purple. I really wanted to smoke it but my joint skills are lacking. ~~pres~~ Pressure's on. Max was sitting next to me and helped hold shit and to my own amazement ~~we~~ I actually got a pretty good J together and Max, the driver, and I all smoked a good time and Max talked about his ~~car~~ 2005 Mustang back in Germany. Best joint I've ever rolled considering the circumstances.

He let us out at this Chinese buffet and ~~tried~~ tried to charge us $70 for the ride but Big took out the photo that said $20 and it was just awkward to prove him a liar like that. We gave him $30 and went to eat. Jucky, Gage, Otter, and CC were there and we all ate a ton and then walked back to this hotel where we both showered and are now. Peace.

May 2, 2019

Unexpected nero yesterday. Can I go into town without spending a day? Claire and I woke up somewhere around 6 and had sex. The way it always happens with Claire is very formulaic, it's kind of hilarious. We're always some respectable distance away until I go to put my arm around her and then it's on. But yeah that was pretty nice. Also that morning Spotify and I were able to steal my account back from the Spanish dude and pretty soon after that we went to breakfast at Denny's with Jucky & Rabbit. At the time, Claire and I were intending to leave pretty soon after that so we brought our packs and sat down (where I'm sitting now) at these benches outside Denny's—

May 3, 2019

Some dude on a bike with blue hair came by so I had to talk to him and stop writing.

Mostly talked about gambling etc. But yeah so after chilling there at those
benches we decided to yeso after all and as best as I can remember we just went
back to the Sure Stay and booked another night. We got a different room but all the
odd paintings were the same. As we were re-booking Flaniel appeared and
got a room right next door but honestly the guy's alright so I didn't mind
and Lucky, Rabbit, Big – Oh! I forgot part of the story. Sometime soon after
Denny's we all took a cab to this bar to watch Barcelona + Liverpool play
Football. I was just there to hang and drink some but the woman at the bar
was a harpy and wouldn't even let a person sip a glass without presented ID.
Super annoying. Lucky had ordered me one and I had to stealth sip it.
But yeah we met Big there and then went back to the Sure Stay. Claire went
out to call some people on the phone and I went out to the banisters outside
to smoke and look out at the mountains in the distance. Ridgecrest is a dusty,
industrial – trash sort of town that mostly sticks along a couple of roads.
~~But there~~ There's something about it though that was just beginning to touch me.
Claire came back and we went to Rite-Aid for snacks. We knocked on Lucky + Rabbit's
door to extend the invite but Lucky assured us shirtless that they were busy. ~~Whatta~~
So Rite Aid was cool. I saw Crund in there and knocked off his hat. We
talked for a bit and Claire and I got a Talenti layered gelato and left. Super good.
~~B~~ The woman at the register was hilarious. I was high so when I got the
ice cream and cash back I walked away from the register with neither and that
was her cue to begin screwing with us. Claire didn't want a plastic bag + it was all
about "Saving the Planet." Funny Stuff. But I did forget to mention a stop at this
army surplus place called Todd's that was high key alt-right but had this
cool Visit Nepal Poster and other vapor wave-y shit.
We went out to dinner with everyone we knew, basically. Except Gage +
Coffee Cart. It was awesome. It was this Mexican place where I had the
super good Shrimp tortillas and everybody else in the restaurant left because
we were laughing too loud.
I went back to the hotel while everybody else went to the bar and
I was really in a distant mood but Claire was getting all sexy so I gave it
a half-hearted effort + we went to bed

Next morning (yesterday) turns out that the bus only runs on Monday,
Wednesday, & Friday and nobody was confident about hitching out of there so Claire
and I took a long time after a second round of Denny's to decide that we were
gonna stay another night at this place called the Clarion Inn which Claire
would use her mom's card for because (drumroll) it had a pool.
She, Joe, and I walked around a mile down a nicer road until we arrived and
this place was way nicer than the Sure Stay. Real classic roadside Inn. Multiple
buildings of uniform industrial-friendly doors and palm trees and the pool.
Joe and I had a race and actually he won. It was a freestyle deal and I even
did a flip-turn but he got me. But the water was so cold. It was okay though because
we'd alternate between pool, hot tub, then dry in that order. ~~Then~~
We went to the market to lunch and resupply then they also got a Papa John's
(Louisville rep) pizza and I did have a slice but I primarily ate my French bread
green apples and grapes. Such a good meal. ~~After~~ Joe left us and Claire and I did more
swimming until it was too cold and returned to our super nice room and we had
some really good sex actually and then smoked together in the evening cool on a bench
by the parking lot. I got the pipe rolling toward the end and Claire just took this big
hit and she is so cute high and we looked at the pool lights for a minute before
going back to the room and watching the Office on Comedy Central. Both episodes were about
Michael's goodbye and it was all so beautiful & well done. Then we went to sleep so
warm and satisfied together. It was so awesome.
We both somehow woke up around 3 Am and had sex and went to sleep again.
Then, this morning we woke up at 5 and had sex again (Claire is an animal),
and just barely made it out to the bus in time to go. I did have to really quickly
shit in this vacant lot. I did LNT but it's still hiker trash. Turned out alright.
The bus finally came and everybody was on board and we just had an
awesome ride into the mountains, hustled off the bus (farewell Lucky ☺) and got
going. I did some music listening today since I bought new earbuds in Towns
and the trail was easy for the most part so we did 29 miles and are now at
camp.
I think I saw the desert for the last time today. On one side of the ridge
was the massive dry valley ~~Ridgecrest~~ Ridgecrest is in and on the other side,

green draped granite. Gonna miss you, desert. Really gonna miss you

May 4, 2019

We have arrived in Kennedy Meadows. Claire and I did this massive (feeling) 21 miles into. This morning it was like really hard to wake up. Last night was one of those where you feel uncomfortable in your sleeping bag so I didn't sleep all that well but then again it's getting to be 11:30 and I'm still running on it so maybe I should give the night's rest more credit. But yeah Claire was also really tired but we finished the first and only serious incline and were greeted with an even closer, peaking view of the Sierra. Super cool. After what felt like an eternity spent hiking through this barren boring (but lowkey lush) canyon-y hills section we came into this really Montana-style valley called Rockhouse Basin. Except for lots more scrub brush. That being an addendum to the Montana comparison. But it was nice and this large, pulsing, and at first concealed River whose name I don't yet know appeared as we moved along the rim of the basin toward a break in the formed by that river. The trail trailed the river until we were in another meadow but here we found frustration as well as beauty. We had thought that in that meadow we would find Grumpy Bear's the restaurant (group consensus (Robbit Claire) agrees on that spelling) but instead we found only a trail junction. A trail that was 3 miles to Grumpy's - Fuck that. We took a break under a tree and then hiked on to the great Kennedy Meadows Pop 200 elevation 6473.

A party was raging even upon our arrival. A good live band playing country tunes, a dog that only wanted to play fetch with a pinecone, and general mirth. And we left immediately. I was really hungry & wanted Grumpy Bears! We got a hitch there from a nice couple from LA and I tried once more to order 808 and failed. I did get a lemonade and burger though. Plus a spot in the sun with a long green valley backdrop whose horizon was upheaved by a low sharp pine covered peak. Super & Otter ate sat next to Claire & I as we ate.

When we finished we checked out Triple Crown outfitters and I got recommended a ton of good ideas and I'll be going back by there Monday to make some or.

But after that we hitched back to the Gen Sto via truckbed through Colorado while the driver's two kids sat near by. Had to prevent

myself from falling. The party was even bigger when I returned. Rabbit, Bizzy, Cowboy, etc. The table was full so I ~~slep~~ laid in the nearby hammock & smoked. And also drank.

I listened to the live band a couple times and their lead guitarist was a great rock-a-billy guy and the other guitarist at one point played a beautiful Purple Rain with the mandolin as a primary instrument. Tipped them $2.

I re-met Julian and evidently he is a Marxist so I super interestedly and politely invited him to discourse and though heat did glow from Joe at times we all had a lovely debate and ~~we~~ were still relishing the good times after the debate had closed. Biz told me about this hippie fort in Copenhagen. Cowboy said I had the teacher appointment because I was describing to Biz why I thought he'd find smoking in California to be a better experience than what had made him quit back home. He had the same anxiety problem I'd had because unregulated weed's high THC concentration does not like some think make for better weed. We all became the BDB (BK) Big Dick Bandits (Bear Killers). Everybody's ~~I~~ naming their ice axes. I did a Cowboy-focused inspired freestyle that everyone liked. We went over drunk and disorderly to the peaceful affair hosted around the campfire by Rabbit, Gaper, and ~~Claire~~ Claire and ruined it entertainingly with our tomfoolery. Now all are tired and it is time for bed. I had planned for an emotional musing over my time spent in the closet but fuck that. Another time, perhaps. There is much to be said, but maybe I won't be able to say it better than my entries already have. Goodnight.

May 5, 2019

I suppose Spanish people are partying somewhere haha. I'm reading Ulysses right now laying in the sand by Triple Crown Outfitters. Bit high.

Grass swept wind carries dust
To settle in the heat against a ~~the~~ ~~post~~ dry wood,
Coobend to a span of wire
running just to there across the valley.
a Pot, clay ~~burned~~ formed by fire
molded ~~by hands with care~~ once by artisan hands
sits beside the post
Yesterday, today, tomorrow.

Now it's the evening and we're camping at Grumpy's and they've been playing country & classic rock all damn day but as soon as Claire & I want to bed they started playing bangers which we had to sit and listen to in isolation. The last couple nights with Claire have been very difficult because she somehow enjoys making out without having sex and that just kind of tears me apart. Anyway, today is really May 8, 2019

and I've been sitting around Kennedy Meadows for a mighty long time. Today's the last day though. I've spent something like $500 on Sierra Gear and resupply and today our crew'll get some packages and we'll be gone.

Not a whole whole lot has happened here but there have been some standout moments.

I needed new shoes so I hitched alone to the Gen Sto for the airstream trailer shop Two Foot adventures and wound up spending like 3 hours talking to Charlie Brown, the shopkeeper. He was kind of crazy and suspected conspiracies against the white race, but he also believed he and his partner were meant to be together through all reincarnations. Really sweet. He did Underground Techno raves in the early 90's. Cool dude, overall. He's a sensible business man, too. Reminded me a lot of Will & Joe's dad.

Also during the KM haze I got to know Craftsman & Shady better. They live in an airstream and really love an old folkster named Doc Watson whose music is really good. Specifically Shady Grove, a song whose name inspired Shady's name. Super good song. I love it.

There was also this time in Grumpy Bear's that I sat on this pool table covered with boxes for shipping packages and looked at this really cool topographic relief map and traced our path through some of the Sierra. It was cool to see the passes etc. It's looking like we're gonna go over Kearsarge into Bishop. Really cool.

Yesterday was fantastic, also. I had Chili Cheese fries, but I spent most of the day finally assembling my Sierra kit. For most of the day I still needed crampons and I had been planning on buying these $90 ones from Two Foot but by the time I hitched from Grumpy's Charlie ~~had been~~ was gone. I panicked for just a minute because I didn't want to spend $150 on them and

luckily the general store had these awesome crampons for only $45. So clutch. Better deal than anywhere else.

When I picked up my bear can Mom had sent me a ton of surprise food. Also a bunch of little alcohol containers. Last night here at the general store we drank them and traded tastes and Gaper had just gotten a new tent (it's a mountaineering tent and weighs 6 lbs) and he wanted to break it in. ~~We all~~ Claire, Joe, Big, Rabbit, and I all got in there and Rabbit, Gaper, and I all packed up Gaper + I's bowls (Gaper's was cool + small but it was harder to hit) and just hotboxed the fuck out of it. I'm proud because I was the last one smoking. But it was just a wonderful time. at the end of it we went out to the movie theater and watched the stars. There was this one meteor right in front of us that was super orange and Gaper talked about feeling like a fly on the wall observing PCT + JMT hikers during his Sierra High Route hike. Really interesting. I slept in the hammock last night and now I'm just chillin'.

There was this painting in Grumpy's of an old man that evidently the woman who painted it had dreamt of. I thought he looked strong but Big said he looked like a old man whose kid just figured out the TV remote that he couldn't. Hilarious. Downloaded a ton of music last night. Peace.

Oh, but also. I named my ice axe Muir's Gift and carved it into the handle. It's still ~~Ap~~ May 8, 2019

But now it's 8 pm. We only hiked like 7 miles today, ~~but~~ ha ha. Fuck yes fuck headed into the Sierra. Seriously legendary day though. Claire + I left before the rest of the group (aside from Cowboy) and were worried they wouldn't leave until the next day or something because we took this hour long break at the bridge crossing of Kern River and saw no one. Eventually though, Big caught us and we hiked a couple more miles until 5-ish, and set up camp in this really nice valley area with lots of pines (sparsely placed groups of them) and rock piles and green fields and a stream. Claire and I went out to explore the fields, found this tree we really liked, and locked eyes. We laid down in the grass beneath the tree and had this just wonderful sex that had been a long time coming and it was so beautiful in the evening light. Afterwards we drank from the stream and climbed the rock piles. I found a really big crack I could fit in and another I could crawl

through. Then as we were up there Rabbit, Joe, Oberon, Crunch, Smiles, and even Flamed showed up and we all chatted around dinner until the evening. I think today was just about the perfect day.

Also I'm writing from inside my trusty old MSR Freelite 2. Had Mom send it out for the Sierra and I just feel so at home. It has been way too long.

My pack is super heavy but honestly it's not that bad. Given we only hiked 7 miles. But I definitely could have done more. So loving today and feeling very optimistic about the future. Snow tomorrow, however.

May 10, 2019

We're snowed in! The storm that everyone said was going to come in on Thursday did, and it came pretty hard. Yesterday morning everybody was up by 5 and Claire + I headed out around 5:50. My pack was really hard to get set up because I think I just didn't do it all that efficiently but once we got moving things were awesome. The trail was definitely challenging but we were just keeping going. There was a 3 mile or so incline out of the valley where we camped that you just had to take really slow sometimes cause it was steep. Plus morning pains. There was this log that fell right down the trail so you just had to walk on it ha ha. But once we got over that saddle we came into this giant meadow of green grass with a river cutting through and on the very other side you could see a big snowy peak or two rising up behind pine covered hills. So exciting.

The trail took us up and over the rim on our right and back down to a wooden bridge crossing of the South Fork Kern River where a ton of swallows all flew about each other and there we saw Crunch + Smiles and also the rest of the gang caught up while we were there. Lots of fun and joking as always. But all things must end and so I queued up some Doc Watson and listened to that whole album. Really cool and it reminded me of when I used to listen to all that old school blues stuff when what I really wanted to hear was Led Zeppelin's first album. I got off trail thanks to advice from Otter and his dad but the climb was shorter and a bit more challenging but it was also off trail + beautiful. Soon we got to snow and what

we'd thought would be the top of the mountain and I tried just about every type of Mio on snow balls. Really tasty and gave me some morale for all the snow we had ahead. I didn't even think too hard about the storm until we felt the first few flakes. Then as we were finally descending it really started coming down. I also took an alternate route from trail that wound up getting me alone and way ahead of everybody else. I guess they went back to the nearest section of trail but I cut ahead through the snow up this hill and nearly skiied back down to this valley spot in the pines while the snow fell. Eventually everybody met back up and we hiked on until the snow turned into rain and we pushed so hard to make it to camp. Eventually we saw Cowboy again which was good because we were super worried for him. He was napping out the rain in a that tiny tent. But eventually we reached the beautiful but flooded Yosemite Meadow and there are all of these huge granite rock walls but now today the sky is so full of clouds you can hardly see any of them.

We woke up this morning and the rain fly of my tent was sagging because of snow. My tent must have looked like a snow mound. We didn't even know at that point it had snowed. Everything is covered, and it's still snowing. It's almost 1pm. Claire watched while I built another snow man. Woo hoo! But yeah — Joe, Rabbit, and Oleson just showed up! We hadn't seen them since the bridge yesterday. Oleson got a fire lit and we all roasted our clothes to get the wetness out. Dubious success. I burnt one of my water bottles.

I decided that while we were staying around here I wanted to get a good — Claire keeps disturbing my writing when she gets in the tent — good sense of the land so I climbed up these huge rocks that jut out from the forest. I found this great rock ledge at the base of the highest cliff and you could see the ~~jutting~~ ~~rocky~~ granite cliffs all dressed in somber white that hem our forest in and how they fell away by a great snowy meadow with a shallow lake amidst.

May 12, 2019

Before bed the 10th I went out to the fire and Branch told me he'd gone to the top of the boulders and that the view was cooler. I went off to the boulders. He'd told me to follow the tracks to the left so, not seeing the tracks, I went to

the left of the mound and began to work my way up. Not the right way. Got caught in this really tight jam between two boulders without good felt footholds and I slipped and my left thumb cracked like it did at UPS when I'd try too hard to jam a box into the wall and then I leapt/fell toward a spot I caught myself. I'm not sure if the thumb thing is a minor break or not, but at this point I'm only worried about whether or not it's going to affect my guitar playing at the Bishop hostel. Hurts to open my bear can.

But anyway I did find my way to the top even though after that fall I was completely freaked. There was a good little crow's nest spot between the rocks and I could see super distant desert hills between those two snow-dressed granite cliffs that fall by the meadow. On the other side, to the west, the sun was beginning to set over sharp-toothed sawcaps. Super cool.

The next day, the 11th. Super cool day. We got into some really powdery snow and I was wearing these goggle-glasses. They have this awesome orange sepia tint that just so well compliments the color of the trees' bark and the golden sunlight of the morning on the snow. It glimmered in three dimensions. Plus there are these really cool super soft barked crazy-limbed trees that don't get much pine needle growth. Really cool trees. They were everywhere. We got up through there (slowly) to this bit called Owen's Valley. It was this awesome spot in the mountains where two met but with enough space in between for a hiker to gaze across the low desert valley at another more eastern range that blocks off Death Valley's from view. It also had AT&T phone service, so I posted on Snapchat and called Mom for the first time in ages. Rabbit gave me a Snickers to let her call her mom on my phone. Wish I still had that right now. Yearning for the morning poptart. Saw some bear tracks later that day. Took lunch on this high pile of boulders and read a bit with a snowy mountain valley in the background. I had crossed a snowy meadow earlier that day. Everything (nearly) is snowy. But then Crunch, Smiles, ~ Claire came so I chilled with them & got water from Diaz Creek.

It was decided when everyone arrived that those wishing to attempt Whitney got, and would push on another 5 miles. This was not easy. Big, Claire, Cowboy, Olsen, got, and

I faced a long and snowy climb that was as melted as I'll get out. Jack Forever and it was all really hard but eventually we made camp on this random patch of flat snow. I had been pushing really hard and I believe we were at 11,000 feet and I was feeling real bad. I ate a super good refried bean concoction given to me by another hiker, though, and I felt better. Super thick. Really good. We went to bed at like 7 because we were all to wake up this morning at 3 am.

We did. Made for easy hiking but we didn't make tons of progress because Big hadn't eaten or drunk anything in ages and was feeling bad. We were all having water problems, though. Snow going is slow going and not a single stream Guthooks promised flowed true. It wasn't until Chicken Spring Lake, frozen over at the base of a grand white cliff (steep slope), that I would have anything other than boiled snow tainted with the ash of yesterday's beans burnt while boiling.

But we had to work at it. Muir's Gift and his companions fell hard against the ice until a decent pool was bled. Really cool. But later in the day I got really frustrated at anything there was to be frustrated at because I was stressed about food rationing for Whitney. I was hiking with Claire but I had to tell her to keep going while I had lunch because I just needed to settle down and relax unobserved. Thor sat down immediately after she left but he didn't talk all too much until we started hiking so it was okay. Plus, with eating I felt a lot better. He's also from Denmark and he's really well traveled and told me about how rowdy European hostels are. And also about the Lost City of Colombia. Which reminds me: Rabbit recommends Ski Ski Beach.

But anyway I caught up to Claire and then Olsson came by and we all descended into Rock Creek Canyon together. Super fun. I did this huge glissade that was just so steep and great. Plus Rock Creek is beautiful and enormous snowy ~~mouth~~ mountains loom above. Especially where we're camped. It's on dry ground and is not at the Whitney trail junction. Because we finally collectively realized that none of us has enough energy or food to hike it. Thor made a fire and we all just chatted. Joe and I smoked. Good times. I ate ramen w/ cous-cous and put it on a tortilla. I also drank tea. ↓. Good night.

May 16, 2019

Been a few days. Everything since Forgotten Canyon has been a story in progress

until last night. Second day early start. Woke up around 3 but as usual didn't get hiking until like 5. Still, a great morning. We took on up the canyon wall through the pines and up a very steep snowy saddle that Thor, of course, was able to ascend very quickly + simply without any traction control. Next to ~~be~~ crown the saddle were Claire and I. Then down again we went, slowly we were coming around the range getting closer to Crunch's "real mountains." The same ones once Vesterin by twilight. We spent most of that day hiking with Big and Thor. We did this hilarious glissade over too icy snow. I went first and hit some postholes frozen hard enough to throw my ass a bit and but other than that I was fine. Big criticized my form. But it was yet his turn to go. He chose a spot without postholes, but it didn't save him. After two seconds of sliding his yell of glee turned to one of pain. He was wearing shorts. "My arssss!" He tried to stand to end the torture. It works. He wobbles. Slips. Falls, back again sliding down the hill. "My aaarssss!"

Great form, Big.

That slope took us down to a fern meadow with a perfectly clear river cutting cornices along its course. Below – mountain. Hiked on through the pines, talking about Black Mirror and dancing to the YMCA and other 80's music. Super fun.

After being lost for some time Oberon ~~Big~~ had joined with us and we ate lunch together and I mentioned how I ~~loved~~ loved the history of a pipe. And specifically mine. ~~Up~~ It broke that evening :(But our view was fantastic. There was this wonderful view of the ~~new~~ more jagged mountains beginning to surround us as we got closer to Forrester Pass. We only had five miles to camp, but it was going to be uphill. Joe shows up, we for the first time wonder where Cowboy was, and then we left. Joe and I race – glissaded. Ahhh. We did some sort of river crossing after that and then the climb began. It lasted a really long time from what I recall. There was a great pause during when we all appreciated this view of more jagged mountains from the side of the hill. But it wasn't super crazy until we got out of the trees and walked a really steep 40 feet vertically to the top of Bighorn Plateau. We had finished the climb! Jubilee! Until ~~we~~ I looked up. "Claire, is that snow?" It was snow. Coming our way. We were super exposed following tracks that, if the snow were bad enough, could be erased. I was nervous

I Everytime the sun comes up I'm in trouble

* including Rabbit, Crunch, & Smiles

AF. We were moving across the plateau when I started to feel the snow. Rain jackets. Breaking quick for the trees. We made it. Twenty minutes later, thunder. Snow was falling harder. Claire and I set up the tent. How much was gonna fall? Turns out not too much. I was afraid it'd be like, closing the gates to the Sierra. The mountains cut the sky around us like a broken porcelain bowl. Clouds rolling in over them. Whew. We'd made it to a good campsite though; Tyndall Creek, the one we'd wanted. Every rolled up* and we started to get ready for bed for a 2:45 am wakeup for Forester the following day. I spent a couple hours curled up in my bag listening to the Lemon of Pink by the Books recommended by Super and it totally got its grubby mitts all over my brain and molded. So good.

They've been playing Whitney in this coffee shop 4 No Woman 7

Tokyo But then we had to get up and I ate my Poptarts and walked through blue snow and the Milky Way and dubious snowy ridges all around and we walked past Gage & Craftsman's tents and they poked out and said hello and we did too and then we hiked on: Cowboy, Rabbit, Claire, Joe, and I. While crossing the tundra we saw a lone headlamp and hailed it. It came over and was Smiles, having been lost in the darkness after her crampons broke. We did this short forested section and advanced more over gently sloping high snow hills and approached the crack in the mountain, Forester Pass. Oberon gave Smiles his microspikes and went on up the pass with Crunch, Thor, and Big. Cowboy made coffee but we got cold and started up not long after. Joe basically walked straight up the incline, I kicked in my frontspikes, and the girls took the switchbacks. I think Cowboy came up all the way along kicked in footsteps. Joe and I clambered onto the stone switchbacks and then Cowboy caught up. We Joe was getting his phone out of my jacket and I thought for a minute that I had left my phone at the bottom of the pass. I hoped Gage would pick it up. It was in my pack the whole time. We all talked about Die Hard over the snow chute and "Yipee Kai-yay"'d at the top. I forgot the "Motherfucker."

¶ There is just such a feeling from Forester Pass. It's this huge canyon. A forest rests in its belly and the walls are so fucking high & sharp.

We ate lunch after a ~~two~~ a really good glissade (my highest & steepest yet) that everybody had to do and a really steep downhill I tricked myself into attempting next to a beautiful river in the forest called Bubbs Creek. I think the canyon is called the Center Basin. Craftsman, Shady, and Gage joined our group for an extra long lunch

? Keough Hot Spring

~~Travesty~~ Hot Spring Mono Lake

acme.com/jef/hotsprings/
Travertine

where I made another cous cous burrito and Joe made ~~fish burritos~~ chimichangas and he just generally looked like Guy Fieri at the time, as well.

To get out of the valley was this terrible slog in the wettest snow ever up a the really steep northern side. After finally making it to the top Joe, Oberon, & Flor, ~~and~~ decided to gtfo over Kearsarge that day into town. The rest of us were lazier and camped at the trail junction.

But in the morning there were disconcerting clouds. It was ~~so~~ time to go. We attempted to take the Kearsarge Pass trail but it was way too fucky so we had to trail downward to the Bullfrog Lake trail. Heading up the pass we met this dude named Snacks heading down who had evidently Yo-Yo-ed the PCT last year and then we reached the top of Kearsarge Pass and it is such a great view of the Sierra on the one side, and then on the other it's like a straight shot down to desert. Passes = doorways. We all got down to the parking lot and I got a truckbed hitch with Cowboy, Craftsman, Smiles, and then Shady in the cab down to Independence. Such a beautiful ride. Rippling mountains as usual. Also a lone dude walking across the desert floor that ripped past us. Also all the colors of the trees around this house on a bursting snowmelt creek. We waited for the bus to Bishop then it came and Otter and his dad were on. We rode on this beautiful bus ride all the way to the hostel I'm staying in now. Last night I went on a great bike ride to the grocery stores and this town has just got these phenomenal mountains just hanging out everywhere in the background. It's so cool. I love the west. I'm in this super modern coffee shop that's just like home but even better because the West and I think it's called Black Sheep Coffee. Everybody here talks about bouldering and I feel so cool being a PCT Hiker. I'm in love with the place. Bout a bag some tea by the ounce. Just like Sufi. So so in love with this place. Dude just gave me hot spring recommendations. We watched the matrix last night on VHS. Also they have a guitar in the hostel. This morning I fooled around hitting licks over U-Haul's piano playing. He is also really good at guitar. There's going to be an open mic night in this shop tomorrow. Think I'm gonna participate.

May 24, 2019

Recommendations from Collin: Leavenworth and Index, WA and Polebridge MT

It has been altogether too long. You know how town days are. I laid around ~~and~~ Bishop for 5 or six days in the Hostel with everyone. Big and Thor went into the mountains and wound up making 35 miles in 2 days. Had to get off trail in desperation from storms. Which makes sense because evidently there's been some unholy amount of snow dumped up there and it's going to be really tough going from here on out. Biggest snow year since the '70s ~~as~~ from what I've heard. Super excited to give her the old college try ~~ASAP~~ ASAP. I wanna be one of the first to make it all the way through.

I have been loving the trip

May 25, 2019

though, ~~B~~ Let's just say I'm anxious to return. We drove from Bishop down the valley with 395 and hit I-40 E and went quickly into the desert. I was a bit sore I'd been convinced not to hitch to Cardiff-By-the-Sea. My plan in the car was to ~~ask~~ grab my bag at the In-N-Out and hitch from there. Didn't do it. The desert was alluring. Into empty spaces and weird mountains that form like loading errors in a distant procedural world. Lightning flashed in an incoming storm, striking down from the heavens to outline the buttes and hoodoos. ~~We~~ Before the storm though, on the first day of driving, we stopped at the Grand Canyon which was cold and green all the way to the end of soil on the temples. also, they're called temples. I desperately need to schedule some Grand Canyon backpacking trip. Beautiful. When it got late we drove out into the Mojave and slept off a dirt road. Sunrise, Beautiful. Ridiculous red on the horizon. Slept again, and then in the car, ~~We drove through~~

We drove through a snowstorm to make it into Durango. We had stopped to eat in a town called Cortez on the other side of a pass ~~the~~ and when we left it was snowing. Only got worse as we climbed. Shit really sucked until we got into Durango then it was gone totally. But we had been going through real winter conditions. Oleson did a fantastic job under high stress. But since we've been in Durango it's been constant luxury. We're leaving today:

May 26, 2019.

Real tired of being here. I think this place was really costly. Accidentally gave Joe like $90 for weed. Real stupid shit. Onni did send me $100 but still. I'll ~~also~~ also have to pay Oleson for gas etc, But whatever. All I can do is live in, right? Here's hoping I can do that

I'm also tired of Claire. We've been together most nights here. I need to tell her at some point today we can't tent together anymore. I just don't want anymore.

I went swimming a couple of days ago at the Rec Center here and that was really nice. It was just like back in college when afternoons had no better occupation. Felt really good though, to do it. I think I swam a good amount and then ran 5 laps of the track. I do miss college in a lot of ways. Thinking about the purpose of the trip. When am I going to find why I'm here? I know that's a path leading nowhere as I've walked it many times. No use pondering it. Just pining for it. Sometimes you just feel a bit used up. I have been so fucked up. We took lots of edibles and the other night I just drank, smoked, ate edibles, and went hard generally. It was good, but my stomach and I are glad to be running this second day since sober.

Yesterday I finished Ulysses! Finally done. I have Leaves of Grass and a book called the Snow Leopard. Spent some time in Maria's Bookstore downtown trying to decide whether I wanted e.e. cummings or Walt. Went with Walt although e.e. cummings' stuff was really really good.

We went to this restaurant on the dime of Claire's grandmother called the Ore House. Claire's favorite. Joe and I split a $73 dollar steak called the Chateaubriand. Ridiculous. Her aunt and uncle ~~prepared~~ had us over for dinner twice and both times were fantastic. Jesus I am so ready for trail. It's gonna suck, but it's gonna suck right.

Anecdote: I didn't ~~ka~~know how nice the Ore house was going to be. None of us did. I walked in there in short shorts, the same Reach For the Sky shirt I've had on since arrival, and a crushed up roach in my hand. Old women had pearls on. Lots of dirty looks. I'm fairly proud.

May 29, 2019

Just to clear something up, I am no longer "tired of Claire" at all. Felt really stupid and ~~wrong~~ guilty reading that just now. Since the last couple of days we've been having a really good time together. But yeah anyway, we drove back to Bishop on Sunday. Olson did an all night haul to ensure we'd get the car back to Reno on time. We drove past Las Vegas in the night and I had had 2 edibles (the last two) and I think that Dark Side of the Moon was on. The city looked so crazy. It was <u>so</u> flat and the only slightly raised portion of the city was the Strip. You could see the Eiffel Tower thing and all the filth. Looked a lot like Sodom/Gomorrah. Stephen

King chose his devil's city well. That night before bed Joe and I ~~sat~~ smoked a spliff sitting ~~on~~ in the motel we rented's driveway.

The next morning I got up too late for the continental breakfast & checked in to the hostel again. We got a cool room this time though that was just for us and it had this staircase down from the entry door to 4 bunked beds. Claire and I got a bed that you could just hop over the stairway rail to get onto. We also had sex over the bathroom sink. Ha ha.

She's being super cute and is distracting me from journaling. The gall. Haha. But yeah we resupplied and I met a bunch of new hikers that were cool. Then we left Tuesday afternoon. We got a ride from a woman Oleson met at the bar named Maya and she was driving us but Claire forgot her boots at the hostel so we had to go back but on the way we stopped at Keough Hot Springs which was nice enough (no Deep Creek, though). We also ate dinner but then finally we made it to the campsite and went to sleep.

The morning is when the real fun began. That'd be this morning; the first morning of our 12-day food carry all the way to Mammoth. I have so much food I can't fit it all in my pack. I have to strap my ~~bear~~ food bag to the outside of my pack. Getting over Kearsarge again was tough AF. I made it up after Gator and he was sat across a short ridge bridge atop a giant boulder. I joined him up there and took in the view. It felt good to be back amongst the mountains. Back in my playground at the top of the world. I felt like this would be the stretch that everything began.

We didn't make it much farther after Kearsarge today. We laid down for a break at this river and decided to pitch camp. It began to snow not long after. It's still snowing. We borrowed Joe's tent ~~Maria~~ Marie, ~~and~~ I ate dinner, I drank tea, Claire and I have been playing with our noses, and now I am profoundly tired.

I started the journal entry planning to write about how tired I am. How earlier it felt ~~so~~ impossible watching the snow fall. But now I'm feeling okay. We'll see how tomorrow goes, and that's all we can do. Our packs will only be getting lighter from here.

May 30, 2019

Claire and Rabbit left us this morning. Claire's pack was way too uncomfortable and she just couldn't take it. That exhaustion I had written about last night was still there that morning, and everybody was feeling it. Everything was frozen and it was cold and also 4am. But Claire just felt yesterday really hard, and she asked Rabbit if she would go back over Kearsarge. It was really tough. Ultimately, such things happen. The view from camp

was just so beautiful. We were by ~~the~~ Bullfrog Lake and the sun was pink on the mountains. Gaper, Sunkist, Joe, and I continued on. I was nervous though. The first climb of the day was powdery from fresh snowfall and I kept thinking about how Thor got frostbite and then my pack broke a bit off it's buckle ~~p~~ and I was like, "That's it. I just have to get off." But then everybody stepped in to help and we got a new system worked up. The other spoke would break later but by then I was stable and was able to fix it. Anyway, Olsson got me fixed up and Joe gave me a velcro band and everything was fine. "I get by with a little help from my friends." But then we began a really steep and powdery climb up to the approach to Glen Pass. I was feeling really good and I could do that thing where you just ~~too~~ take another step and it was good.

When we actually began the approach, Gaper took the lead because he has a ton of mountaineering experience. And thank God. There were no steps up Glen. And Glen is really steep. ~~Gaper~~ There was an old line from before the snowfall but Gaper didn't like it. Nobody did. It looked shady. It was the official trail route, but in snow it's anybody's game. We did a different path. Gaper literally created this route with straight climbs, switchbacks, and snow chute traverses. We were all pretty damn scared, except Joe who was just listenin' to podcasts + giggling to himself. It was a frightening time, but we made it to the ridge. We hung out there for a while and ~~A~~ dried out tents and ate. Beautiful view! Then the path down was almost equally scary (but not really) and then we ate lunch.

We hiked down in this valley around some lakes until it began to snow as usual and now, viola! Here we are. We just did another seal in Marie and that was fun. Now I've eaten and had tea and ~~see~~ written in my journal and so now I will read. Super good vibes today. It's been a really good one. I'm so proud we got over Glen. This is really intense shit!

May 31, 2019

Long day, few miles. It was a good day, but at this rate let's just say I hope VVR is open on June 7. We're just making such little progress every day. Though I did just check Guthooks and according to it we almost made 10 miles today so that ain't half bad. I really do love every day out here. It's just tough.

We started out around the Rae Lakes. We were camped ~~on~~ on this little strait

between them. The snow was hard (even though our hike didn't begin until 7) and we were making easy progress through one beautiful morning. As we got lower & lower you could see more and more flowing water and eventually it got down to crossing creeks and swollen streams. One memorable one was tough to figure out how to cross. It came tumbling down from a narrow and snowy canyon with pines on either side. After crossing the footsteps took two paths: one went up a hill and the other was more ~~Ea~~ & East and skirted the shores of thawing Dollar Lake. Without knowing about the second option, I chose the first one. Everybody else took the lower path and even though mine was harder, it was cool to see them walk from where I was.

After we got past that hill the view of the northern valley really opened up. As we went down even lower into more pines you could see thin waterfalls tumbling down ~~from~~ bare rock on the northernmost wall of the valley. ~~Also on~~ While I was looking I postholed and lost my shoe in the snow. I put my whole arm in there and still couldn't get it out. I had to dig my own shoe out of the snow.

We took lunch in the pines and I realized my pack set up had to change again. The weight of the food bag tore a ton of the strap-base-area-thing from the pack. I am now carrying it on top of my sleeping ~~ba~~ pad at the top of the pack. The process is ridiculously complicated to get it on there, but it works well. I'm calling it the Sherpa 4.0. Sherpa for a hiker who carries way too much stuff and 4.0 because it's the most recent model.

After lunch we started seeing less and less snow. Eventually it was clear enough that we were following the actual trail through green-ish grass. We crossed this fantastic super wobbly suspension bridge over Woods Creek. So fucking cool. The bridge was hella long, too. The definition of creek out here is ~~hella~~ stretched AF.

Then ~~we~~ the trail swung right and we began a climb that I expected to be a huge, sloshy, nightmare but the entire mountain was dry from snow. We crossed a stream and looked up and there ~~was~~ were the two waterfalls I had noticed from before ~~to~~ bounding down the hillside. Beautiful. Reminded me a lot of how Matthiessen describes Nepal in the Snow Leopard. "Hallucinatory." Last night I read a super good chapter that was mostly about the author's search for meaning and how it began and he also talked about notable opinions on the search; Many saying to ~~stem~~ steer clear.

athen   achieve

I think it was Jung though who was quoted as saying that once you hear the Voice it's too late. Matthiessen also wrote that the only danger during the journey is ~~to~~ attempting to turn back. Extremely applicable. Love it already. Also, the "journey" is better described as the Tao or "the Way." The road to self actualization. I don't think I'll ever be able to find a rational explanation for how these books can explain a way I have felt and do feel. I just wish my friends would understand. Evidently the purpose of the Tao, ~~or the~~ or the process of ~~achiev~~ ~~achieving~~ achieving self actualization, is to clear one's mind of things other than what is you. Maybe I'm misunderstanding some stuff there but I've got quite a bit of book left. It's been too long since this sort of relevance. I love the Penguin Orange ~~series~~ collection. They always choose the hottest shit.

But anyway we started up a valley chasing the Woods Creek up a while and are camped here now. I can hear the water rushing over rock as I write. There were a couple of sketchy snow sections nobody expected and Sunkist saw a Marmot and thought it was a beaver. Good times. But I'm kind of mad at her because she just lit up a joint with weed in her grinder that she kept since yesterday and half of that was my weed. I expected that we would share that ~~bowl~~ tonight. You're welcome, I guess.

June 1, 2019

Longest mile day yet this stretch today at 10.6 miles. Not bad. Especially including that we did Pinchot Pass ~~too~~ this morning. Not that it was that hard. But still we were definitely going really slow up it. We'd had a great morning for hiking. All the snow was super frozen and we just strode over it up and through a forest. We accidentally did like maybe .5 off trail by mistake following ~~some~~ tracks bound for Sawmill Pass & ~~the~~ Bishop. Fuck that. We fixed it by following the slope of a nearby hill until we got back to trail. The miles leading up to Pinchot were slow but beautiful. It was a really open series of successive hills that showed off all the mountains 'round. Very slow but steady. Pinchot was the same. It was never consistently very steep, but there would be moments ascending the hilly spine that led to the top of the pass that'd force you to slow down quite a bit. ~~If~~

I didn't stay very long at the top of the pass because there had been

some dark, billowy clouds around and I was anxious to get down before anything could coalesce. Nothing did, however. This would be a running theme throughout the day. But anyway the slope down into the valley on the other side was super gradual and easy to descend thank God. The valley wasn't super beautiful, though. Basically just looked like Hoth. Plus it was still super cold and cloudy - We all thought it was only a matter of time before a snowstorm. We set up Joe and Gaper's tents and spent an hour or so just chatting and it was super nice, but it never did snow. As a matter of fact it got super sunny. It stayed sunny until around an hour and a half or so ago when it dropped a bunch of snow. We're at camp now though w/ 3.7 miles to ~~[illegible]~~ Mather. We'll see how it goes

June 3, 2019

It went okay! We got up around 4AM I think to ensure we'd get there when the snow was still hard. Walked a while through forest but after ~~[illegible]~~ not too long the trail brought us into this huge snowy valley surrounded by mountains ~~[illegible]~~ and without any trees. Lots of hills, though. I pulled far away from the group. I think I may have missed a break or something. I felt like an astronaut. In three layers, my gloves, and my hat on I felt like I was in a space suit walking on the moon.

I got to the pass and sat on some tall rocks ~~and~~ for like 30 minutes or something waiting for the crew. So small to trek with such audacity. When they arrived I had been there a long time so I went up first. We chose an already ~~[illegible]~~ cut track that wasn't the PCT that went straight up over a hill, did another, and then disappeared over the crest. Gaper thought what ~~[illegible]~~ was over the hill might be sketchy. He was right. It was a footpath over a really steep ridge. We had to climb over rocks, ~~[illegible]~~ walk on all too narrow footprints, posthole, and to finish it off we had to climb straight up just to go back down to the top of the pass.

Post-peril-pass-time was really great though. Joe joined me there and we laughed because he had wanted to take the actual PCT because it looked scarier but we convinced him otherwise ~~[illegible]~~ for safety then the one we took was way more scary. Then Pirates of the Caraibbean showed up then Everest rest of the

and ~~the~~ Flow and we all drank and smoked and celebrated.
To get down from the pass there were 3 ~~many~~ major slopes. I
glissaded all three of them. The first one was really steep. I might
not have done it if I weren't just a little buzzed. I went down **so**
fast. It was so awesome, so exhilirating. The next one was similar. I
couldn't stop ~~the~~ smiling. Especially because Joe and Oberon both
tried to glissade down the first one as well and they both ended up
hitting their asses and doing a flip. On the third glissade I had a ton
of time on my hands. I looked at the view around me, watched
a snowball get larger as it rolled next to me, etc. Felt **so** good to be
alive.

After the glissading we postholed down to a creek we could get water at
and took lunch. A storm started coming down the valley. I said let's set up
tents but everyone was doing this joke, "Oh, I'm sure it'll pass."
Even when it was definitely not going to. All our packs went in
Geper's tent and all of us got in Joe's. I was laying in there with my
knees up for probably an hour and we also smoked a joint and
listened to "I Got Stoned and I Missed It." ~~At~~ When it was time to
go I was putting on my shoes to get out, blabbing about something and Joe
and Oberon threw the rain fly back and it was mountains everywhere.
Very shocking, we had been in there so long. "Now for our latest
exhibition," said Joe.

The rest of the day was a slippery, steep descent into a low valley. I was
so fucking exhausted by the time we rolled into camp at that it was
really hard for me to appreciate the dry trail, green grass, and general
early-summer Sierra Nevada vibes. We did like 13 miles and Mather.
At camp Joe and I set up our tents but both fell asleep cowboy camping
next to the campfire. I woke up in the night and all the stars and also
the ~~new~~ ~~??~~ via lactea. Awesome.

This morning we woke up at 5:30 and walked for the first
two or three miles on dry trail through this beautiful forest. I
believe the area is called Le Conte Canyon. It follows the Middle Fork

Kings River. We then started a long, 7 mile climb to the top of Muir Pass because we had heard of a shelter on top and really wanted to make it. We took a lot of nice breaks, including one by a bridge in the sunlight and another where I read the next chapter of Snow Leopard, and another one right before the pass ascent, but we were still making really good time.

Muir Pass is a real bitch to climb. From the very beginning you think you're almost there, and then you get over what looks like the pass only to find it's not for another mile and more climbing yet. So demoralizing.

But we did it. And it was worth it. Because Muir shelter is a dope ass place to stay the night. It looks so cool, made of stone in an almost Nepalese fashion, it's warm, and I just saw the most beautiful sunset of my life from it's doors. Everybody was high and we were just watching this amazing color display breaking out behind Mount Goddard which was shaded a deep blue. Liquid gold and bronze. ~~and pink [illegible]~~ The clouds were wine-stained. Amazing.

~~Muscle~~ Miscellaneous:
- I started putting wild sage into joints and everyone loves it
- I listened to the Peer Gynt collection this morning. Beautiful
- There was this one really nice lead in the MFKR
- I tore three pages from the journal to start a trail reg. in the hut
- It's hung on antlers

June 4 2019

Gypsy, Sunkist, our new friend Tea Time, and I were just talking about landscape. As usual, I was talking about Olmstead. How his hand created a fairy-tale ~~[illegible]~~ experience for me every time I went to the park. Makes you think about why I love hiking. Out here we get to live amongst ~~[illegible]~~ scenery crafted by the hand of God. Nature is time's artwork.

Today coming down from Muir Pass was very flat and slow at first. It was cool though because we had this great view of some rugged mountains on the right side of our channel. Funny how Nature has corridors. Joe and I got naked and dipped in the river nearby. Sugarcity, fuck you too tha.

But of course we hiked down and down and down into this beautiful canyon along Evolution Creek. We had to cross it, too, and that creek is no

Pila, Aosta Valley, Italy
Ski job in October?

joke. We just sort of on a whim, decided to cross it in a different spot from the trail crossing and thank God because we passed through a smooth, thigh deep, leg wash and the trail recommended class IV rapids.

We followed the canyon all the rest of the day going down and there was this insane view we accidentally got of a huge waterfall of the Evolution creek and then looking North and enormous Valley view. Also when we got to the magic spot The Only Living Boy in New York had reached its climax. So good.

Scrambled down some loose rocks and made it to camp where I tried both of Tea Time's Oolong teas (one normal & one coconut) and got camp fire smoke constantly driven into my face. I also told a couple good jokes. I really liked the teas, too. Good times. Today has been fantastic.

PS: Because I can't bear not to write it down:
(Gaper pours water over the fire)
Me: With the delicacy of a surgeon. Best fire-putting-out ever.
Gaper: You're about to see history being made, Frolic.
Me (after a pause): Why couldn't they have figured that out on Notre Dame?
Tea Time is French and chuckled. Whew!

June 10, 2019

Yeah, kind of got lax about updating. I'm confused tho because I feel like I remember journaling in the Muir Shelter. Oh shit, okay. Just got my days confused again. So.

We all woke up really late the next morning & was great. Wasn't a big deal either because we had a ton of big trail and it was one of the most beautiful stuff I have ever seen. Paradisical. Manzanita bushes were flowering pink bell flowers, aspens were getting leaves, the traverse along the rushing Middle Fork (?) San Joaquin River, and every time you turned around there was this amazing view of Mount Goddard. I sat for 5-6 minutes with Joe by a bridge leading out of Kings Canyon NP and looked back at the mountain and deer watched us from Muir Recreational Area.

We spent the day climbing back up to the snowline and when

we made it, it started to rain. By the time I got my tent set up the worst of it had fallen and everything was soaked. I was cold and unhappy and I just shivered in my sleeping bag until I fell asleep for a couple of hours.

Wasn't long before Sunkist, Joe, and Oberon were shouting Gasper & I awake to continue hiking once the clouds had gone at 5pm. We were delirious. "No sleep 'til Mammoth!" Really I am glad we got up because we got all the way up and over Selden Pass. It was a beautiful ascent through a small canyon and then the view from the top was a sweeping one of distant sawtooths. We got just down from the pass and camped on snow. Joe and I had a joint in Marie and I went to bed satisfied and exhausted.

The morning was rough and cold, but we cut our way alright across the snowfield to descend into some forest. We were trying to decide whether to trust a log over a creek when someone I'd heard a lot about but never met showed up: Travis.

June 11 (morning)

I hadn't met him before but it was a really great thing that the dude showed up because just after we had a huge river crossing to do and he and I ended up doing it together. It was really sketch but he had me the whole time so it was great.

Sunkist enlisted with them because they were traveling faster than the speed of sound and she needed to get to town. Oberon, Gasper, Joe, and I hiked up this cool super wet dry section of trail that was very relaxing for me because it was a rainy day feeling and there were tons of soft sounds all around me. When we finished the climb we hiked through a snowy forest and then went down a really steep descent - turned bushwhack into Vermilion Valley.

What a beautiful place. We smoked with Flo and Everest and then had to do a stream crossing that Joe and I Leroy Jenkins'd and Oberon and Gasper climbed over a log. We camped dry and had a fire with a beautiful view all the way down the valley and everyone set up tents but cowboy camped by the fire pit.

The next day we did a river crossing right by a waterfall and

Then we wound up following the waterfall straight up the valley wall. Sketchy as hell sometimes but whatever. Walked through flat lands up to the top of Silver Pass which had good views of surroundings. For the rest of the day we'd descend into valleys and then come back out of them on the other side (passing the beautiful Purple Lake and getting an amazing mountain view from a mountainside we were on) until we got to some bumpy & dry soil and cowboy camped.

We blew through the last 11 miles to Mammoth that day and Sunkist picked us up celebratory and we got beers (Sierra Nevada IPAs) and ate at the Latin Market and then checked in to the hostel. I think I stayed up until like 2AM.

Next day I spent a lot of time sewing my pack where the way I was carrying my food had caused it to tear and that night we all got pretty drunk and ~~we~~ told stories in the jacuzzi.

The next day was yesterday and we resupplied for like 6 days and slept at the trail head. Rabbit & Handstand are back. We all smoked and we have service here so I watched Seinfeld in my sleeping bag. Nice. Ready for today.

June 11, 2019 (10pm)

Small mile day today, but it was infinitely better than the last section's first day. Today almost feels like a gift from the trail. a promise. ~~of~~ We woke up and got hiking super late, and Tony from Hither Heaven was with us. We had a super tedious hike through the labyrinth forest. This time we didn't even see McCloud Lake. We also lost Oleron. We didn't see him all the way from there through lunch, and then for like an hour. He had gone off trail and gotten way ahead of us. Once we had caught up to him we were on dry trail near Red's Meadow. Gaper wanted to camp here like he had wanted to on the High Route, and he wove a wondrous tale of a hot spring. The rest of us were easily convinced.

Initial impressions weren't great. The spring seemed too hot and the campground unappealing. Joe & Gaper found a better camp

though, and we ate dinner there. Joe found a cool mountain view on some nearby boulders and we looked around. Then we returned to the Hot Spring. When I got there Gaper had gotten up to his shins and said you could get used to the heat. He was right I got used to it and began to crave it everywhere. Nobody else had this impulse. I got naked and deeper in a while the sun began to set and the sky lit up pink and purple as I sighed in relief. A creek rushed past a small cabin and through the pines the sky shone fuscia. All while steam came off the waters of the hot spring and the water brought ease to my body. After the sunset I went all the way in to the water. Dunked twice. Nobody else ever even reached knee level. I will say it was really hot water, but that's exactly what made it so good.

We returned to a fire at camp, enjoyed that, and are now headed to sleep. Peace.

June 12, 2019

It's crazy that it's June. Our campsite is on this huge mountainside. We're exposed here to the mountains, and it may be the best view we've had. We're on the Eastern side of the Middle Fork San Joachin River Valley, looking at the Ritter Range across the valley. Mount Ritter is an imposing two humped granite face, covered in snow. The Minarets, just south, are an almost coral-esque arrangement of tall, thin rocky spires. Just below them to the East is Shadow Lake, and we could see this frozen from a break spot earlier in the day, but From camp we saw an avalanche. So cool. This is an amazing place.

The way here was nice, too. We followed the MFSJR for most of it. There was a river crossing a ways below a giant waterfall that you could see really well from the second little bridge. Two bridges in the middle of a flooded creek. We also saw the Devil's Postpile, and that was cool. There was also a moment of switchback dry-trail with a gorgeous view that was very classic PCT. It felt really good. Trail in foreground, amazing view behind. Peace.

June 13, 2019

Today everybody set alarms for 5:30 AM and Nobody got up until 7. Very nice. I had time to make tea. Last night I watched Seinfeld in my bag. Ha Ha. Once we got started hiking I was flying. I put on Led Zeppelin III and I haven't listened to that in forever and it just jazzed me up.

Eventually we rejoined the JMT under Mount Ritter by some frozen lakes. We took 1st lunch near the top of Island pass. As we descended the mountains all around looked so dope. Especially to Stairway to Heaven. We got some fantastic water from Davis Creek and as while we were talking we heard voices, faint and unfamiliar. Three dudes rounded a hill. JMT-ers! Oh, shit! It was really cool to see them, I thought we'd be too early.

But then later we had second lunch on a rock 2.1 miles from the top of Donohue Pass. Super easy pass, like a baby Muir. Getting down into the valley was fine until we got hit by this crazy debris section that was a posthole minefield & difficult to navigate. Eventually we made it to dry trail and camped not too far away on the edge of a huge meadow with a waterfall called I believe Vista Creek. But you can see the mountains we just came down from, and also some of those up ahead. Peace

PS. There is a nosy marmot here.

June 13, 2019

This morning was a late one. 9 AM hiking start. I think we're getting a bit exhausted by the Sierra. I was able to read a bit before packing up and after I packed up we smoked a spliff. It was nice throughout the walk, dipping in and out of meadows. Joe, Olean, and I took first lunch in one such meadow and Joe told me this cool story about reading 100 Years of Solitude for 7 hours via public transport in Europe. Super cool. I had to tell him about that time with Monte Cristo in Disney. Also today I saw a watersnake! Really cool. "Black on red, you're okay Fred. Black on yellow, you're a dead fellow." Shoutout to Pap. This was black on yellow, but it seemed timid.

We got to ~~Tuolo~~ Tuolumne Meadows after this beautif

bridged river crossing at some rapids where the water was super deep and had to wait for Joe because he took a wrong turn. Sunkist and I threw darts at trees. By the time he arrived we had decided to go into Yosemite. Tioga Pass is closed but we got a hitch from some really cool rangers. On the drive in we saw Half Dome.

Now we're camped with a gorgeous view of it ~~on the~~ with a full moon and tomorrow we'll keep descending all the way into the valley. Can't wait. Tired. Peace.

June 16, 2014

Staying in the Ski Hut, baby. We woke up "early" at the Backpacker Camp this

ah shit I fucked the pages up this morning. Turn the page.

June 16, 2019 (Morning)

Last night was mad real. Actually so was all of yesterday - We did this crazy 4 mile descent along the Snow Creek trail into the valley that just had this insane view of a waterfall at the bottom of the valley and the rock walls on either side.

Oleson tried to talk to rangers about our alternate but it didn't work, and then we made it to a bus stop which we took to ~~to~~ Half Dome Village. We were in line for food when this dude gave us his 50% off Employee Discount. Hellll Yessss. Not that we really needed it though. All he really gave us was the confidence to answer "yes" to "Do you work here?" Never got further than that.

Pizza was really good and this dude gave us a beer for simply being PCT hikers. So cool. Then we took the bus to El Cap after waiting forever for ~~bus~~ it and we laid out an empty spot in the meadow for a couple hours ~~Then~~ & could see a couple people climbing.

We went back to Yosemite Village and resupplied at the "too busy, too expensive, shite place." - Oleson. All of us talked as each of us packed in our resupply and then after for until it got dark. Sunkist was already at camp. Caught the bus through the night to a cyclist path. I was drinking the tall Sierra Nevada Gaper'd bought for me when we started to hear someone calling for help through the trees. Spooky. We called 911 and they said they'd sent a ranger and that we could leave. We quickly set up at camp and then went back to the road in the full moon to smoke and drink. We watched headlamps ascend Half Dome to our right and Arches (?) to the left. ~~Apparently~~ As told us by one of the people we joined there, climbers climb at night, not ~~day~~ climbs after 10 AM. So cool.

Rabbit is leaving for good today and I feel like it was a really beautiful way to send her off.

(Night)

This morning was up. Up & up. We had to climb 4500 feet out of the valley over 9 miles. Exhausting. Not to mention the heat. But we made it! We took second lunch at the point that the trail rejoined ~~the~~ Highway 120, and after it, everybody fell asleep in the sun.

Everybody was nappin' and nobody'd planned it. I don't know how long we slept or when we woke up, but enough time had passed for storm clouds to block the sun and make everybody chilly. We packed up with our rain jackets on and got moving down the highway.

It was a really beautiful road. There was a lake view with smaller Yosemite style valley stuff going on behind, shrouded by clouds. Everything was solemn and stark.

Also I learned today from a sign at Olmstead Point (from which you can see Half Dome) that Olmstead was the first chairman on the Yosemite Management Board. Makes so much sense. The place really Really felt like an Olmstead.

We smoked some by the lake and Claire & Gypsy got really far ahead but I caught them because I started moving at like 5 mph or something. I was hauling ass. I made it here to the Hut first and met Ken and two weekenders. They're cool, summited Cathedral Peak. Told us that once Tioga Pass is clear this place just swarms with people. We haven't seen anyone all day.

I made too much tea on the stove in this place. Gonna have Iced tea tomorrow morning I suppose. Super good mood. Goodnight.

June 21, 2019

So the alternate wasn't all it could have been. But it was really fucking cool in its own way. We stopped after leaving the ski ~~hut~~ hut late at this cool carbonated water spring and walked past the insane Tuolumne Falls where there was a ton of spray coming up. Instead of taking the PCT we took a trail off junction following the Tuolumne. It would go down into the "Grand Canyon of the Tuolumne," but for now it was just kind of a cool place. We sat by this beach and tried to swim but too cold.

As we followed the river the rock around us rose higher and the forest got more dense, Mosquitos Everywhere. We had to wade probably 4 out of the 11 (?) miles we did that day. First through like, a swamp, later through the actual side of the ~~Tuolum~~ Tuolumne ~~on~~ up against giant boulders.

The canyon was so dope. It was a cloudy rainy day and thunder rang against the dark stone. Water tumbled down ~~the walls~~ from the heights and roared delighted in the Tuolumne. There was this

crazy cool waterfall called Waterwheel Falls that would cycle water with its spray.

I was listening to this dope Joe Rogan podcast with Lex Fridman where they discussed AI and human consciousness. Really cool.

We reached a river coming down as a fall that there was just no way we were gonna cross that late in the day so we cut through the underbrush to set camp. That night Joe & I listened to Wednesday Morning, 3 AM and smoked late. In the jungle.

Next day we did cross the river. Gaper had found a spot he thought looked hot and tried to cross. Bad plan. The water pushed him off his feet and he began to stumble. Lost his (Grandfather's) hat. Goes down. Being swept away. Enormous falls behind him. He had to make it to the rock. He grabbed on and pulled himself out. No kidding, he almost died for sure. Oleron got us to go up river after Joe and I tried and failed at a different spot and we butt scooted across a log. Terrifying.

There was an amazing view of this super narrow part of the canyon. Maybe 20 feet across. Crazy. Jurassic Park, dude. But then as we hiked/waded on we reached a junction. On the sign there was a note. "If you are planning on hiking the PCT alternate, the river ahead is impassable." Signed Everest & Flow. God dammit. Frustration. The other sign said 22 miles to Yosemite Valley, so we just decided to cut our losses and take that back. We had to cross this awful plank bridge across the Tuolumne. The water rushing beneath you made it feel like you were moving really fast to the left. The plank wobbled also & was high. But we made it, and spent the rest of the day climbing out of the river canyon. We got a glimpse of Hetch Hetchy. We camped, went to get water and saw a bear hauling ass through the trees. Cool.

Next morning we made it to Highway 120 and Sunkist lift us for Lee Vining. I took an edible and got way too stoned.

I had that old trip where everything feels trashy & stupid. By the end of the day we were doing a huge descent into the Valley on the Upper Yosemite Falls trail & that was insanely beautiful. We got dinner and smoked/drank with those same people at the backpacker campground. Also a coyote got into Jasper + Claire's packs and I had to chase it off.

Next morning we took a bus to Fresno and got a rental car. We drove through beautiful yellow ranch land and then back up into the mountains. We were looking at a campsite by a river and decided against it. Five minutes after we leave we hear something fly off the car. My phone & wallet. Both were fine but almost got run over. I've got a little bit of Rocket Man in me.

We camped in this State Park on a hilltop. Joe + I talked deep and he helped me decide that college is probably a good idea for me. I also had to scare off some small-ish black approaching animal.

Next day we finished the drive to South Lake Tahoe and Joe + Oleson hitched on to trail at Sonora Pass but Jasper, Claire, and I got a cheap hotel room. Claire and I had obnoxiously loud shower sex (which was really not easy), got dinner at a burger place, and went to bed.

Today I woke up at like 7:30 and sat around on Reddit and wrote a little list. Watched Pewdiepie play Minecraft. I showered and around 11 Claire and I got breakfast (delicious) and started to hitch. Jasper went off to the library and may go up to Washington.

Claire and I got a shuttle hitch to a hilltop where a rich woman picked us up and she told us about her rich husband and their fancy home and her life by the tidepools in Hawaii. Then we were given lunch by the wonderful Jen and Lee. Jen told us about this awesome trip on the Baja peninsula involving a race and a shark boat thing. Super fantastic people. They also gave us Starbucks & a short ride. It was in Gardnerville and Minden, Nevada. Wonderful spot. Wonderful people. Then

Gardnerville

we got a hitch from a super cool software designer named John who climbed Half Dome in a day while in grad school studying Neuroscience. Cool fucking dude. He took us from the edge of ~~Minden~~ all the way out of his way to the trail up Sonora Pass (Highway 180).

Claire and I hiked around six miles and had sex (really really good sex) here at camp. It has been such a fantastic day with her.

Peace.

June 25, 2014

'Sup. That day after last update was no good. Some parts were dry and those parts were steep uphill. Also we got off trail where it was really hard to get back. We had to get over these huge rocks. Tons of snow. I was just so tired - Couldn't see any tracks. Cool basalt dome, though. I was way to tired to appreciate our beautiful ~~a~~ campsite in the grass and we had only done like, 11 miles or something. Pooped.

Next day wasn't so bad. We woke up much earlier and somebody told us that the snow would only decrease as we got closer to town. There was also this high and beautiful saddle and valley. On some dry switchbacks we found a ~~ex~~ tiny flow of water through a cool natural arch. "There is a fountain that was not made by the hands of men." I listened to MF Doom and he has a song where he samples Scooby Doo. Haha. We sat on this random roadside for a while and this couple offered to take us to Markleeville. Nah. Hiked just a little further to a lake and camped.

Today was awesome. We woke up ~~be~~ early and left late but we had a ton of dry trail ~~on~~ through beautiful places. Tons of green rolling hills and snowy patched mountains and super blue lakes. Also we ran into Lawrence & Liza - What are the odds! Lunch was delicious. The chorizo, celery, and bagel. There were also very dry sections. There was also a bit where I was almost slid to my death on a really steep snow traverse. I slid but landed on a ledge. A Spaniard named Danny helped us find anoth-

way. Now I'm really tired and wanna go to bed. But we did like 18 miles. Pretty good. Best moment of the day you ask? Flowery hillside. To the left the hillcrest and giant odd colored stone under a midday moon. To the right forests, hills, lake, mountain w/ snow. Good times.

June 29, 2019

Day after that we started on a really windy flowery ridge and came down into a snowy forest. Story of my life. ~~So much so that I think I already wrote about~~ it. Yeah, the real next day Claire and I got up from the rocky hilltop where we camped and got moving around some giant lakes. Following footprints we wound up at the camp of Sunkist, King, and ~~Fun~~ Flo. We ~~ran~~ hiked with them throughout most of the day. The approach to Carson Pass was beautiful as we started from a hill across a valley from the pass and made our way over. At first the pass was snow-free but then we had a long but not too hair-raising traverse to the top. We decided to walk just a little further to a parking lot and there was also an information center there where the sweet old lady volunteers gave us free soda and veggies and a cookie. So awesome. I also learned that that one type of tree is called a California Juniper, I think. This dude who was there gave me a screwdriver for my trekking poles to stop them sliding. Cat's Wrestled great and Claire & I continued on for a while before seeing a familiar face. It was Thor! It was really nice to see him and we just talked a bit before heading on to the lake ahead.

During a break Sunkist & Co. caught up and we smoked and had to hike over lots of snow but out of nowhere I just started hauling ass. Running. Claire did too. We tired ourselves out and camped alone together 4.4 miles from South Lake Tahoe.

Not easy miles were they. First it was windy and cold, then we had to bushwhack w/ lots of mosquitos, and my right Achilles hurt, but we made it to Highway 50 and got a ride pretty quick from John Solomon, a weed farmer. He had a drawing from his daughter on the ceiling. He gave me free weed and dropped us off at Nikki's Chalet Cafe in SLT. We got the buffet & it was awesome then went via

rented electric scooters to go to the Hard Rock. On the way we had ice cream sandwiches. We walked into the hard rock and the place was like a nightmare. People desperate for hope stared through cigarette smoke into neon flashing lights. We couldn't get a room because you have to be 21. I was really glad to leave. We wound up staying at the Blue Jay Lodge and had an awesome pizza from somewhere for dinner while watching Free Solo.

Next day we took care of business. Resupplied, X Lime-d around, all that. Also laundry. I had to get my charger from the hotel and had to Lime all the way across town. I learned how to whistle the William Tell Overture. We sat in a coffee shop for a while and played Chess and then around 5 got a hitch back to trail where we did 5 dry miles and camped near Echo Lake.

Today though, it's been mostly snow. We had some dry trail until the beautiful Aloha Lake, which felt very classic Sierra and spent most of the day in snow aside from patches all the way up Dick's Pass and then down again. We got a good view of the lake (~~L~~ Tahoe) up top. Now we're at camp after like 13 miles total. Snow done soon? 44 miles to Truckee.

July 4, 2019

Spoiler Alert: Snow was not done soon. It did get a lot less as the miles went on, though. Claire and I had many an opportunity to enjoy lavender and Heath leaf covered hillsides with great views of L Tahoe at a luxurious 15-18 miles a day until Truckee. I really miss her for real. She decided to go up and do Washington instead of NorCal for her last month before school and while I'm glad she did, I really do miss her. On one hand I've really been craving solitude. There were times I was ~~super~~ really annoyed with Claire basically for just being there. On the other hand, her company was really good. Today was the first day out of Truckee and I did manage to pull like 25 miles. So being alone is definitely faster. It's also cheaper. Claire was always really good at convincing me to spend, and if I'm gonna finish this thing I'm *really* going to need to buckle down. Still though, a lot of todd

was really sad ~~and~~. The first six miles were smooth sailing. I got to go through two drainage tunnels under an expressway singing Hallelujah. But then I hit snow, and I wasn't mentally prepared for it. I was really fucking pissed all up until I reached 20.8 miles for the day. I was on this purple & yellow mountainside in a light breeze looking at the mountains and lakes all around me, and I just decided to push harder. I was thinking about trying for a thirty because the trail is now almost totally dry, but I decided to camp here at 25 or so.

- There was a cool hut that I passed dedicated to a kid named Peter Grubb who died in 1938(?) at 19. Super cool place, wished I could stay the night.
- This morning + last night were cool. I cowboy camped at Donner Pass behind the Summit Haus and the stars were fantastic.
- Leaving Claire at her hotel in Reno was really really tough. Physically & emotionally. I left way too late in the day and couldn't get a hitch after like 2 hours so I ~~ub~~ Ubered. But it was really sad though. She's cool. On our hitch into Reno this kid in the backseat was reading the Lost Hero! I nerded out with him.
- On our way into Truckee this guy Reno Dave gave us beer and a woman gave us the best strawberries I've ever had.
- There were a few surprise sketchy traverses last section.
- I miss Claire.

July 5, 2019

What a fantastic day. I woke up at six and ~~broke down camp~~ began to hike at 6:40 ~~and~~ Sierra City bound. I spent most of the morning descending through pine trees - eventually into this really deep valley that took forever to reveal its river. On the bridge crossing that river I met a cute brown Lab who licked my knees. Eventually I met three ~~hikt~~ hikers who had not gone into Sierra City and after meeting them I wasn't sure if I wanted to, regardless of my need to charge my phone. I crossed over the beautiful Yuba River via bridge and made it to the highway into Sierra City. As I was half-heartedly trying to hitch ~~and the I~~ ~~[illegible]~~ a SOBO popped out of a car and I asked him what I should do. He said go in! So I did. I started walking the road and I got a hitch in 3 seconds. ~~There~~

There were a ton of hikers in Sierra City. Everybody was mostly at the General Store, where I went to get food. I got a $6 chili (best deal on the

menu) and talked with that couple Claire and I saw a couple times. I found out their names are Max (Scoutmaster Hot Legs) and Zuya. Super good folks. Max gave me an Anker charger. I was trying to get the thing to charge when somebody taps my shoulder. I look up and Lullaby. "Woah." She and Dorian had just rolled in. At first ~~th~~ neither party could say much to the other. I took an awesome, free, public shower that was ~~so~~ cold on a hot day.
Back at the Store I had a joint that Lullaby initially thought was a cig and then she, Dorian, and I took a photo. We went to the Cafe and Dorian got coffee and I got tea and we sat on the front porch and talked in between the doors opening. The tea was super good, and soon Lawrence came by and we chatted. He evidently listened to an entire audiobook on the History of American Philosophy because of my love for it that night after Cabon Pass. Wow, so touching. He also told me that Neitzsche is not a fascist and that evidently ~~not~~ an Ubermench is something a person can become. I had always thought it was a "born w/ it" deal. Very interesting. "Hiking w/ Neitzsche"
Then Lullaby and Dorian told me this crazy awful story about crazy people in Seiad Valley and around 5 I headed out down the road for hiking. I got an easy hitch on top of a pile of stuff in the back of a van and once on trail started kicking ass. I was in that phase of a high where hiking is easy af. That was good too because I had a long climb ahead. It was super beautiful, though. I stopped with Jorge and his friend who only speaks Portugese to take in the immense green valley, the bridge, and the dry trail. Made it a few more miles after that, some asshole motor bikers passed me, and now I'm cowboy camped by a lake having done 26 miles today with like 5 hours off.
Also, in town there was a hiker box where someone had placed the rain jacket I lost a couple days ago! Yes! Now there's supposed to be snow ahead of me, but it's like 69 miles to Carabou Crossing. Let's go!
One thing I forgot. In Sierra City there's a bell with two handles that you can ring after the cafe I tried to ring it by grabbing both loops and hanging from them. The bell didn't budge so I got totally inverted. Turns out you're supposed to just pull one. Haha

July
~~June~~ 6, 2019

Today was a pretty good day ultimately. At first it was good. I hopped out of camp and just killed it on dry trail with gorgeous lake views abounding and Crested Butte lookin' like the Sierra behind me. But then, as was foretold, snow. I even knew it was coming and it still just destroyed my morale. I ate a good lunch and talked with this guy & Black (who I may never see again) about Mount Shasta's energy, whether he'd go into Quincy, etc. He had a Black Flag hat on too (You're one of them! You say, that you're my friend!). Seemed cool but judging by the Palante pack he's probably at least 5 miles ahead tonight.

But yeah the snow kicked my ass. There was a weird switchback section of trail, too. Eventually made it to dry trail and even then it took forever to get the morale back. I put on 2 by Mac Demarco and eventually the energy came. I punched it up a ton of dry trail just burning. I probably listened to that album like 4 times.

But now I'm at camp on a dirt roadside drinking cider that Zuya gave me. The same two dudes I camped near last night just showed up, so it's us again.

July
~~June~~ 9, 2019

The day before yesterday was so dope. After an easy and quick 4-5 miles I ran into a woman named Anna and her friend Gail doing trail magic on some random paved road in the National forest. It was so dope! I got two pancakes, a chile rellenyo (don't know), and a hashbrown. After that it was like 14 miles of mega downhill to this beautiful river, the Middle Fork Feather River. There was an amazing steel bridge spanning ~~a beautiful~~ the waters high above but you could get down on a side trail.

I had to make an extremely daring jump to do it, but I found a rock hop route downriver to this awesome swimming hole and swam a while. The water was the perfect temperature and I felt super triumphant the whole time because I conquered my fear of the jump. After crossing I had a rough 10 mile climb to Lookout Rock where I camped with an amazing view and a joint in my hand. Turned out to be a 30 that day, too.

The next day, Yesterday, was alright. I started it in a really good sleepy morning walk to the road to Quincy and then a hitch w/ two other hikers SOBO Wiki and Little Demon. Breakfast was also delicious and I resupplied, charged etc. There was this girl who had been at a festival there the day before ~~a~~ walking down the street making awful retching noises.

The interim period was eh but right now I'm at this awesome place called Belden. It
feels like a good place. Kind of run down. Kind of empty. But it's just so wonderfully
suited to its location in this relatively humid canyon by the river. Now they've
House of the Rising Sun on. Do they know what they're doing?
July 12, 2019
The worst thing about these lapses in my journaling is that I no longer have Claire
to blame them on. But anyway, leaving Belden was really tough. There was a cool stamping
mill with festival graffiti and a really great view of the canyon along some excessively
technical branch of the Feather River. I met an older couple near the top of the climb
who told me there might be snow ahead so I camped that night just below.
The next morning I was just zapped. I had no energy. I hiked with this cool Swiss
dude named Karma and also a Georgia dude named Woodpile. I got legit attacked by
a hawk and nobody else I've met had that same problem. We made it to the halfway
marker at 23 miles for the day and smoked with a dude named Spicy Bite. He, Karma,
and I made camp that night five miles later and three from the road into Chester.
Now this was yesterday that I was in Chester, and I really had a fantastic day. The
morning was a mad dash through clouds of mosquitos on an extremely painful left
foot and then I had to wait ~25 minutes for a hitch but I made it into
town around 9(?). I went to this church where we could stay for free, got breakfast,
resupplied for super cheap at the dollar store, had this enormous peach milkshake
and Karma got one too, ~~and~~ and was all ready to get back on trail that day.
Karma and I got a hitch to the trail and everything before I realized that I had left
my phone charging at the church. It was around 5 pm now and I had to wait
even longer for a hitch but I finally got back and decided to stay the night.
It turned out great! I got to know Highlander (German dude who wears a kilt)
and also Elizabeth showed up somehow so I chatted with her. We had a great dinner at
the Burger Depot and hitched out in the morning. I also finally remembered to pack bug
spray.
Today has been excellent. We did 20 breezy miles to this place called
Drakesbad. The 20 miles were really nice, interspersed with cool volcanic
features. There was a steam geyser called Terminal Geyser and a sulphurous
lake called Boiling Springs Lake! There was also this dude named Jawonne

with whom I talked Jayce. The real party started here at Drakesbad, though. I ran
into Max + Zuza down by this awesome heated pool + showers and Jungle and the
dude who speaks Portuguese and Spicy Bite and some dude who started May 7 were
all there chatting and then we had dinner and I got a beer! Wonderful, wonderful day.
Excited for tomorrow. I think I'm going to set an earlier alarm. Maybe 5:30.
July 13, 2019
30 mile day baby! Exactly 30, too. 30.0. I talked some more this morning with
the couple from near Thurstville and they gave me M+M's. So nice and wholesome,
those two. Said they'd really wanted to meet a PCT hiker and that they watched Dixie on
Youtube. Leaving the site there was a good view of J. Warner Valley. I hiked
past some hopeful fishermen (fishing is like wholesome gambling) into a really
long burn area. Met a SOBO deer there. Beautiful for its desolation. Good
views of Lassen. At lunch (which I took at like 10:45 haha) I read some Walt
as I've been doing lately and I am just really loving it. There was a poem where
he questioned my worthiness as a ~~former~~ disciple (fair). Though he used the word
'eleve.' And there was another in which he assured me of his invisible presence.
For the rest of the day I felt we were holding hands.
I walked through a very dry, yellow pine-needle-littered forest and down a
dirt road to a river. Along this road it seemed lovers in old clothing should walk.
I met up with Max + Zuza at Hat's Creek and did not see them again until the
cave.
The cave (Subway Cave) was a really cool lava tube that had a public passage
through, but me being as I am that wasn't enough. There seemed to be more
tube off the cement and over the railing so I explored it as much as felt safe
alone and then enlisted Max to join me when he + Zuza arrived. Looks like
those tunnels could go on a very long way.
The three of us did 2.7 more miles to a parking lot and on the way glimpsed
enormous Mount Shasta for the first time by sunset! At camp we received 3
free beers from a generous car camper and also got to meet her sweet dog.
We also had good conversation. Evidently Zuza makes her own bread. Cool.
She grows the yeast + everything. Omni vibes. Goodnight!

July

The interim period was eh but right now I'm at this awesome place called Belden. It feels like a good place. Kind of run down. Kind of empty. But it's just so wonderfully suited to its location in this relatively humid canyon by the river. Now they've House of the Rising Sun on. Do they know what they're doing?

July 12, 2019

The worst thing about these lapses in my journaling is that I no longer have Claire to blame them on. But anyway, leaving Belden was really tough. There was a cool stamping mill with festival graffiti and a really great view of the canyon along some excessively technical branch of the Feather River. I met an older couple near the top of the climb who told me there might be snow ahead so I camped that night just below.

The next morning I was just zapped. I had no energy. I hiked with this cool Swiss dude named Karma and also a Georgia dude named Woodpile. I got legit attacked by a hawk and nobody else I've met had that same problem. We made it to the halfway marker at 23 miles for the day and smoked with a dude named Spicy Bite. He, Karma, and I made camp that night five miles later and three from the road into Chester.

Now this was yesterday that I was in Chester, and I really had a fantastic day. The morning was a mad dash through clouds of mosquitos on an extremely painful left foot and then I had to wait ~25 minutes for a hitch but I made it into town around 9(?). I went to this church where we could stay for free, got breakfast, resupplied for super cheap at the dollar store, had this enormous peach milkshake and Karma got one too, and was all ready to get back on trail that day. Karma and I got a hitch to the trail and everything before I realized that I had left my phone charging at the church. It was around 5 pm now and I had to wait even longer for a hitch but I finally got back and decided to stay the night.

It turned out great! I got to know Highlander (German dude who wears a kilt) and also Elizabeth showed up somehow so I chatted with her. We had a great dinner at the Burger Depot and hitched out in the morning. I also finally remembered to pack bug spray.

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We also had good conversation. Evidently Zuga makes her own bread. Cool. She grows the yeast + everything. Omi vibes. Goodnight!

July 15, 2019

Yesterday was a really tough day. Pulled out another 30, and it was one of my harder ones. The morning was great. Beautiful Mt Shasta views and cows hanging around the edge of Hat Creek Rim. Around midday came around to a water cache, and that would be the last water for like 13 miles. Those 13 miles really sucked. Kicking stones through a desert thirsty for 4 miles. But some sections of trail were cool. Savannah looks. I was really struggling to appreciate it though because I was just so thirsty. I was so desperate for water. I was throwing a little tantrum. But I resolved to keep going.

Finally made it to water and just laid around the hydroelectric plant for like an hour. Ultimately made it to Burney Guest Ranch, where I am now. Played violin some just now. Screech. Played guitar last night.

July 16, 2019

I am so amazed I wrote that journal entry yesterday that I crossed it out. I guess it was part of my morning chores. I resupplied, got laundry, charged the phone, paid ($$$$), and then got out of there. I also fucked around with a violin.

I hiked to Burney Falls. So amazing I involuntarily said "Wow" when I first saw it. I was able to do this super trippy optical illusion w/ the falls. I would follow individual drops as they fall and then I just applied that ~~viewing~~ ~~ver~~ viewing style (it is more detail) to spots on the falls and did not go down with any specific water, so I could see all the water that passed through that spot with more detail. When I looked away my vision would be trippy on the cliffside. Super cool. Totally sober.

After the Falls Spicy Bite smoked me up and we talked and hiked over this beautiful dam. Eating at a bridge over Rock Creek, I spent like 40 minutes at least talking with Road Runner. Theo, Max & Yazzin showed up and decided to hike on 3 more miles or so. I was going to as well but for whatever reason some tendon in the back of my right knee started to hurt so I camped at this spot only like .1 miles later.

This morning I woke up at like 8:30 or something. Whoops. I was also really lethargic for most of the day too until, for some reason, 5pm. Up until this time I had only done 18 miles. But at 5, I became a rocket. I just sent it. I met a cute German girl (though she didn't look German) who was doing the second half of the PCT and she invited me to hike with her but she's going slow & also Schlock hiked with her and I can't go there now. I'm glad I said no, too because the rest of the evening was incredible.

The trail is right now super close to Shasta, and for the fading light I hiked with flowers and grasses at my feet, beautiful Southern hills (and the Central Valley) to my left, and the sun burning orange behind Shasta to my right. Got to camp just under 30 from where I started today and hopefully I have an earlier start tomorrow. I want to catch Jugia + Max!

July 21, 2019

The next day I did a lot of that hiking in and out of hillside valleys. Pretty boring mostly, but there were a couple deer encounters to spice things up. One young antlered deer poked his head around a corner at me then freaked. One baby deer charged me during lunch, I had to walk within two feet of this older antler'd deer to get it to move off trail. After all that I came down near McCloud River and saw Max, Jugia, and Spicy Bites. They'd been swimming in a creek nearby and I did too and the water was so cold on a hot day. Then we began this 8 mile dank climb, crushed it, and pounded down to a bridge over some creek where I made 30 miles & had dinner. Sounds like I was ready to stop for the night, right? Wrong. Max + Jugia kept talking about this road at the top of the next climb so I was like fuck it, I'm going. I made it through the night the 5 more miles all uphill to the road and camped there alone, 11 miles from town.

The next morning I was being lazy about getting up so a squirrel ran over my head. I made it into Shasta in two hitches. The second one, from Dunsmuir, was provided by an old woman (young at heart) named Kasey. She strongly reccommended I eat at Berryvale, a health food and deli place. She said I'd make the connection I needed there. Okay Okay Kasey. I'm hyped. Really the only connection I made was with their Spicy African Yam Soup. About a million different people asked me about it, though. Soup Soup.

After that I met up with the one and only Joey Joe outside the Fifth Season and then Oleson too. It was so nice to see them. We went to the KOA and ~~smoked~~ rolled up some joints then smoked them behind the movie theater, just in time for Spider-Man: Far From Home. I loved that movie, dammit. We had some beers at the KOA and Joe and I smoked 'til we fell asleep cowboy camping. Just like old times.

In the morning George arrived in town and he, Oleson, Joe, and I had great breakfast (which George bought for me) at this Bear Diner place. Then Joe got ready to leave trail and Oleson got ready to leave town. George and I had something on our minds: Mount Shasta.

We rented ice axes and even though he had only just made it into town and was running on no sleep, we headed up the mountain that evening to Helen Lake, where we would

make base camp for summit day the next morning. You could see through patches of dense fog
our path. It was steep and straight up a wall of snow to red banks ~~probably~~ 2,000 feet up
We ate dinner with Metro + Chicken Joe and went to bed early to anticipate the dawn.
3 AM. We're getting ready. We left camp at 4 with everything behind us minus 2
liters of water and a fuckton of protein pax bars each. The climb was mostly not too
scary. Even in microspikes. There were well trodden switchbacks all the way up to
the banks, and that was pretty much the whole climb right there. We still had 2,000
feet of elevation to the summit from there, but none of it was frightening or even very
hard.

The summit was a beautiful crag hangout spot. The highest point was like a lookout spot
for a far eyed dreamer. We signed a register and started back down. It was after a mile
or so however, that I realized I didn't have my phone. I had to go all the way back up to
the summit looking for it just to not find it. I was so dejected and destroyed until I saw it
laying unnoticed in the snowfield plateau. Nice. The rest of the way down was scary
because it was steep until we got about halfway down. I just said fuck it and
glissaded. It was a good call and a good time. George and I packed up and headed back
down. I resupplied and we crashed in the KOA without paying a cent.

Today we got a hitch out of town (after eating some plants) from a box truck that
the owner Tom was converting into a home. Pretty much all the trail today (18 miles)
was uphill ~~but~~ and hot but it was awesome because of the amazing Castle Crags.

Tonight we're set up with a wonderful 360° view of Shasta, Crags, and low lying
hills in order from left to right. Beautiful. Peace.

July 26, 2019

George's just left out of town today. The day after last recorded we got going
through easy terrain. Not much was really going on until we met this retired Shasta
guide who has summitted about 100 times named Mike. He recommended this lake 2
off trail called Porcupine Lake. We went there for lunch and it was phenomenal.
Gotta be the clearest lake water I've ever swam in. I opened my eyes and swam deep
to touch the boulders. Lots of fun. Then I read Walt Whitman drying in the sun
while George walked 'round the waterside. We kept walking after lunch,
but I don't remember much of that. Except for that we made camp in the early
evening above a lake where car campers who were playing ~~[illegible]~~ ping

Bito was there and we talked and he smoked us up. The car campers played TAPS at evening. I'm at this coffee shop in Etna where they're playing "Tonight, Tonight, Tonight" by Genesis. I only ever first heard this song yesterday because I had had 'Mama' stuck in my head and decided to listen to more Genesis.

The ~~snd~~ next morning we walked for a while and got trail magic lunch from a couple of Shasta good ole boys who like to sit out by the lake, tell fishing stories, and drink. The trail that day went through a beautiful rocky ridge-like area with max foliage and also we heard this insanely loud moo-ing. As we wound down the evening at camp the stars came out in full force and together into the dark our eyes probed the milky way.

The next morning George probably saw a great sunrise that I woke up too late to assess and we got moving on our way through the Russian Wilderness where there were really cool rocky towers. One looked like a ~~Moia~~ Moai ~~Moi~~ statue and one looked like a toucan. Then we went through a burn area and crows cawed. Finally we got to Payne Lake. Five miles from Etna Summit. The five miles the next day were easy and we got a hitch into town with a San Franciscan thru biker and a local woman who had lived there long ago. I still want to go. George & I had a good lunch of things from Ray's and went to the park to camp. It got into evening after much laying in the grass and we had Pacificos and I smoked.

This morning I'm tired and mildly sad. We met a group yesterday that judged me more harshly than was due for my missing miles. I really don't like people who are so competitive like that. Makes you wonder why you're out here. And what you'll do next. George said last night I might have what it takes to be an author. When should I start to write? I've been kicking around with the thought of an opening like this:

"'Cities are just mankind's subconscious attempt to imitate the stars,' I said. The drone of wheels on pavement washed back over the car. It was 3:20 AM and I was driving west past Vegas. My shift had ended 2 hours ago, but everyone was asleep and I drove on.

'The trouble is, you can only have one or the other. You take the stars, pin them down, and all that's left is black sky.'

'~~What do you hope for then? Where does the eye go to dream?~~"'

I reached down by my feet to grab the thermos there. ~~Green tea. Holy thing.~~ [illegible]body shifted in the back.

'What do you hope for then?'
Mist curled from the tea as I began to sip.
'Where does the eye go to dream?'
'I just hope yours stay on the road there, mate,'
Joe was up.
'And judging by your talk I'd say it's time to switch.
Pull off at the station there.'

July 31, 2019

Fucking hell. It's August.

I wound up zeroing two nights in Etna. The one of the 26th and then the 27th. Totally unexpected. I was at the Wildwood Crossings Coffee Shop writing when Crunch & Smiles showed up. It was really nice and they recommended that RNR Bunkhouse "work" to s[tay] so I said fuck it I'll go there. Cool place, but while I was there and taking advantage of free food I ate a hotdog that was just in the fridge without warming it up. I must have been very h[ungry]. But the next day, whoa! Food poisoning. Unless it was a mild giardia. I wound up zeroing [...] again it was so bad. Also the owner Cat (who only made me draw in some elevation map for sta[y]) brought me like, crackers, pepto bismol, ginger ale, etc for free to help. She moved me to a different bed and in that room she had a collection of books published by the Easton Press. How co[ol] is that? Her mom collected them. Even On the Road. I half leafed through Doctor Zhivago, too - really good. But eventually I got around to finishing The Snow Leopard, and since having done so I h[ave] felt a weight off my shoulders. I've been reading The Unbearable Lightness of Being and it's jus[t] going down so easily but remains intellectual in nature. So good.

But yeah I finally left Etna the next day after a breakfast session and with Billy Goat [&] Queen that lasted 'til 2pm. It was nice to see her, though. She did this thing called th[e] Oregon coast trail and just had a wonderful time and showed me photos. Looks amazing. Only ever got a hitch out because these two hikers knew a dude. I'd been sitting there so long I was reading. Did seven miserable miles then camped with those dudes.

The next day I was rolling by 6:20 and had a fantastic 33 mile day. I climbed into a marble cave which had an awesome valley view and I met these horse riders and on the last 3 miles to camp there were wild blackberries & thimble berries. Amazing. Picked 'em all the way to camp - where I got almost no sleep for some reason. Just really uncomfortable all night.

The next day I did 14 miles (6.5 road walk) into Seiad Valley. The way in was chocked full of blackberries and I picked some and put them in a Ziploc. Like I walked down the Bigfoot & Scenic Byway over the Klamath into this tiny farm town that was charming although it was somewhat full of hicks. I went to the Cafe and got a (one of the last) blackberry milkshake with my burger and both were so good. Loved that place. The owner, the mother of the two workers, was making the meals. afterwards I smoked and talked a lot with G-Wagon among others. Made it just to the top of that awful climb and threw down camp. Here I slept phenomenally.

Today I woke up an hour late and had a really steep surprise climb and was tired all day. I made it without much incident 24 (ish) miles to this cabin that was cool in my imagination and during the day but is now very creepy at night with Dilly + Dally. Dilly was given weed but hadn't the papers/know how to roll it so I did and we smoked. I'm proud too 'cause it was a pretty good roll. Your boy is improving. I was going to sleep in the cabin but Dilly + Dally weren't and so I was looking around in the dark, high, and alone so I went outside and set up my tent. Goodnight.

August 5, 2019

I finished the Unbearable Lightness of Being today so I'm finally free to journal again. Though tomorrow I'll start the Da Vinci Code so maybe it's just going to be a brief resumption of duty. "Where did he get the Da Vinci Code?" you ask. Well, let me tell you all about it.

I got moving after a great night's sleep before Dilly + Dally and blasted an air horn at the border. Woo! Then I met a cool, bra-less woman who told me about the calls of the Mountain & California Quail ("Quark!" & "Chi-Ca-Go!" respectively). I haven't heard them yet but her impressions are really all I need. There was a cooler full of Shasta Cola & I got Creme Soda (delicious) and also I could see the brand's namesake once again in the Southern Distance. I made it all the way to just outside Callahan's and I had been planning on snagging their spaghetti dinner but just after emerging from a trail near Tunnel 13 (America's Last Great Train Robbery) a woman asked me from her table thing if I was hungry. I was like "No Way! Trail Magic!" in my head and said hell yeah. I ate tacos with them and the woman, Rider, was living in her van and had picked up the dude, Pineapple, for a hitch in South Carolina and they'd been together a while I feel. They were just at that spot for sleep that night and had no intention beforehand of feeding anyone other than each other. I feel that this is true trail magic. Perpetrated by bums of the road as well and not just the general populace. Pineapple talked a lot about religion and not in the crazy way, either. He really helped me: "What you say you're looking for is happening right now dude, pay attention!" to paraphrase. Ryder makes artwork and is 20 and now I follow her on Insta. Super cool alternative folks. I admire them greatly.

Dally and I camped just off a bit and caught a ride the next morning. Just as we were getting in, Dally shows up and climbs in, too. Driver was the owner of Callahan's, evidently. He dropped us off at the Ashland exit and we resupplied then split and hiked into town. They went to shower and I wandered over to the theater ~~the~~ district and talked to an old woman volunteer about the favorite plays she had seen and ~~l~~ until it was time to go get my $15 rush ticket for "Mother Road" based on a character from The Grapes of Wrath. Definitely a really great time. I'm glad I chose that play, too, because it was the supportive of the vagrant lifestyle and I felt that that might excuse my smell in the hearts of my neighbors. I was giving them a more authentic experience. Cheesy at times, but ultimately a wonderful play. I then got ~~pizza~~ a calzone and hitched on back to the trail to go like. 3 and sleep.

Next day was really good. I saw Allie again at lunch where I also met Markie Mark who is really cool. We talked to a SOBO named Red Feather and she said all the NOBOs she met carried a lot of fatigue. This was good to hear because I really felt it myself. To think of it as usual (You've hiked 1700 miles after all!) was really nice. Mark and I shared a joint of his and it really had me hiking good until suddenly I see a highway and Lawrence and Jorge lounging beside it! There was a guy giving out beer, the saint. It was a great beer, too. Like PUB or something. It said "Drink beer outside." Check. A good dark beer. A lager, it said. I had 2. Then, another guy shows up and gives us a whole tray of fresh berries. Wow. Legitimately amazing. Plus, Lawrence & Jorge! Nice! I hauled ass 16 more miles to finish at 31 at this dope campground called Klum. I think ~~techn~~ technically it charges a fee but nobody paid except perhaps for the ever-obnoxious car campers. But yeah I got there at 9:30 pm, showered, put my ankles on the plug, and cowboy'd comfy all for free. I glow just thinking about it.

Next day I was hella tired all day and the mosquitos finally started past this highway. We walked on those cool lava stones a while, and I camped after 27 harried miles. I did listen to "Nighthawks at the Diner" by Tom Waits and that's pretty cool.

Today was a good one. I was tired and bored my first 11 or 12 miles but then I sat down for "lunch" and only ate the Unbearable Lightness until it was all gone. That reminds me that ~~the~~ two days before I read while hiking haha. Anyway, fantastic book. Loved every single thing about it. Gonna read more Kundera 4sure. Then right as I finished it Coconut Jam (the cool Canadian) showed up and we smoked a joint. I was proud of how fast I rolled it and then this dude just smoked it like a fucking vacuum. Reminds me of good old Pearly Sweetcake. I know how the Calistoga Kid felt. But yeah that was a great meeting and a great smoke and then the Trail served up a delicious view of Shasta, Klamath Reservoir, and the Crater

of Crater Lake. At dinner I had tea and checked out the Da Vinci Code. Seems I forgot to tell how I got it. I traded Pineapple the Snow Leopard for it and I thought I got the worse deal. In my head at the time the book was very Atheism. I tried to get rid of it for anything else at the book exchange in Ashland but no dice. Now I'm kind of excited. I dunno. It's got a pulp cover design but so did Jurassic Park so who knows. Crater Lake tomorrow. Your boy is hyped. Peace.

August 11, 2019

Crater Lake was dope, but I don't think I saw it on August 6. I nero-d into Mazama. Anywhere that has wifi seems to do that to me now. Plus I had the excuse that the Rim trail doesn't allow camping. In the Court of the Crimson King is now on Spotify, woot woot! I got stoned and listened to that. Next day I got up late and headed up the calf-master 6000 at max speed because of a mosquito horde punishment for stopping. Waited around at the Rim Village with Dilly-Dally getting soda & coffee refills until Coconut Jam showed up and we all hit the Rim Trail. Beautiful trail. Crater Lake is amazing. We climbed up to Watchman Lookout. Later I met Hong Kong, a SOBO that I met on the bus to Campo. He evidently spent his first few days on trail pretending not to know English. Interesting dude. I told him it reminded me of Lee from East of Eden and he said he was inspired by Rush Hour. Huh. But yeah we talked a while and then departed. Mosquito hell and then I got a terrible nose bleed. Made it to the road to Diamond Lake Resort at like 7pm, a ride did not seem likely. A car passed. I was trying to arrange for a shuttle. "Hey brother!" The car that had passed had actually pulled over way down the road. The guy who called out to me is a Sri-Lankan dude from France who, with the driver, a girl who got out of the car and squatted down in her skirt to pee, had been hitching across the country with their kitten Yang (who loved to cuddle on me) before having picked up their beater car for $300 the day before. They were driving to Maine to stow away aboard a barge to France. The girl was a wild driver. It was a wonderful time. I met Dilly-Dally for dinner and beers (I owe Dilly $5) and I was actually crossed because ol' boy in the car lemme hit some dabs. Beautiful lake.

Breakfast buffet in the morning and I wound up nero-ing due to no hitches available when I tried from 5-6:30pm. I finished the Da Vinci Code (eh) and started the Andromeda Strain and also freed a moth from the lobby. While reading I overheard talk about a storm coming in the next day.

The next day, after a hitch from G-Wagon of all people, I saw it coming in

across the valley North of Mount Theilsen. The pines were deep green. Birds took to the cold winds and the sky became dark. It didn't really come in until that night. All afternoon I walked through misty, hilly wastelands until camp. An hour or so after setting up hail started to fall. I had service so I talked to Mom for like an hour and a half. I fell asleep to light rain.

I woke up at 5:30 to thunder. And flashes of lightning that broke the tent-darkness in quick purple. I waited an hour there cozy as all hell until 8 or so then began to hike. It was super rainy all day. I did not enjoy it much. In fact, I was in an awful mood. I was at a water cache at ~~the~~ Windigo Pass just getting drenched. I was also mad because I chose to do the PCT rather than an easier alternate for views but clouds obscured them all. The mist was kind of cool though: Eerie. I camped at a beautiful, slate gray summit lake and it rained again that night.

This morning I was very cold and I had no protein bars left for my 16 mile stretch to Shelter Cove. I ate this awful hiker box thing and was in a bad mood 'til the sun came out at lunch and I made double ramen by a stream underneath Diamond Peak. Good views now. Uneventful until Shelter Cove where I have had a wonderful time. I got here and ate a gallon of ice cream. Then chicken fingers. So hungry. I then watched PewDiePie play Minecraft for probably 2½ hours. So worth it. I have since found Point, Counterpoint by alchemy Husky (a good replacement for the Andromeda Strain, I'll say), talked with SOBOs, hung up my shelter hat, defended my campsite from a persistent ~~bo~~ tarantula, and journaled. I am feeling ~~fantastic~~ fantastic. 'Night!

April 20, 2019 5 month!

And I'm hardly past Bend. But all for good reason! But first, lemme take it back.

I left camp at Echo Lake pretty early following this British dude. We passed this bedraggled dude packing up camp at a rusty ledge. Old Town Road was playing. Kept going. There were a couple lakes, the beautiful Maiden Peak shelter, and I was in a good mood, but it was ultimately a pretty uneventful ~~trail~~ day. I camped by a buggy pond 30 miles distant and I saw bedraggled man again. I had trapped in front of him earlier and he danced through

the phrase, "It comes at the worst time." Hilarious. ~~The~~ Sleep was good.

Next day was difficult. I think it's because I slept in too much, but I was tired most of the day. Especially around 24 miles for the day. I sat down & ate dinner and I was not sure about more miles. Just not in a good mood. I turned the corner and there was a mountain there. South Sister. Right there. I was at the beginning of a gravelly meadow. Felt so big all around. I left the meadow but came into more, and these with purple flowers waving in the evening breeze. North Sister came around. I camped with a fantastic view. I had been very internal that evening. The ~~A~~ journey I was beginning to show itself to me. I write this with the thought of that passage concerning the ~~context~~ context-blurring of truth in daily life in Point Counter Point.

I woke up several times that night due to first freezing temperatures because I was majorly condensed upon. Made the 17 little-food miles to 242 real devastating. And then the last 7 or so were all lava rocks. Pain. But I made it to the road and this dude whose info I do not recall was behind me, too. Already at the road was bedraggled man. I found out he was Pepe (Le Peu) and that I had met him before in like, Big Bear (?). We got a really quick hitch and the dude took us to a favored bar where I just blew $30 on a pizza (that was so good as fuck) and the dude whose name I forgot went back to trail. Pepe and I went to this campground nearby. Really nice evening. Though there was this trashy dude I really didn't like. ~~I~~

Wound up zeroing that next day and sent up a box to White Pass. "Whatever," I thought, "It's just one zero, after all. No biggie." If only you knew, friend. If only you knew. That evening a British dude arrived and I watched he & Pepe talk shit with my ears hearing Seinfeld. That was a shitty attempt at pithy-ness. I was watching this awesome Seinfeld ~~stuff~~ special about his roots. Well, I wake up the next day and Pepe is talking about going to trail days. He & the British ~~dude~~ dude, Ribbit, knew each other and Ribbit talked him into it. I wasn't gonna go. Really. Hitch all the way up there? You're crazy. That morning some dude, a PCT hiker named Famous, was passing by and willing to take 3 hikers to Cascade Locks. I'm in. On our way we picked up a girl named Critter. I was in a car with total strangers and we were all headed to the Festival! It was dope. I was sitting camel seat and my ass fucking hurt. But we made it. So many tents. A city of them poised ~~&~~ in the middle of the Columbia Gorge on an island. I saw J-Lar & Zuzia but didn't feel right chilling for long with them & I wasn't really finding much

interesting in the booth area so I went and checked out a tiny museum for the area
Cool spot for all its kitsch. There was a cool photo of fishermen. Then I went and
ran into Ribbit somewhere and we headed over to the brewery with a free beer for
hikers. They asked if I was 21 and I was! I also got a Caesar salad. Good fun.
Tons of people stopped by our table. Schlerf and this really wild girl from "Fran
named... well... something. She was cool, just hilarious like a mix between Pepe
and Sunkist. But French. Then we went to the market and got PVB beer, 18 cans for
$13. Not half as good as it was out of Ashland. But cheap as hell. I saw Olsen + Sunkist.
But talking with them was nothing like meeting up with Gaper. I came to this picnic
bench table near my tent with Ribbit + beer. Gaper hears my voice and from the
darkness says, "Frolic?" He ran over and we hugged. He and I shared beers and
talked for like, 2 hours. So awesome. I really miss that guy. He had done so much
thinking and seemed really peaceful. Wonderful conversation.
Next morning was dope. I did a relay race thing and won stuff. Or, we won.
I was on a team with Ribbit, French girl, and others. I spent a lot of time
just walking around, looking at things, reading, etc. I had a good time for sure.
That evening I watched this movie about people sailing [illegible] on the Alaskan coast in
canoes and there was a family legacy and it was really good. I think that night I
went to bed early.
Woke up next morning and most everyone was gone. We had thought [illegible]
was taking us back but he changed up the deal so Pepe and I got packed up
and hitching after free breakfast. This feels like a shit update. I have forgotten a
lot. For example I got free $175 shoes because my 1200 miles looked so bad.
Altra guy just gave them to me. Also there was a different free breakfast.
But anyway Pepe and I finally got a hitch from an old, hooch-making woman
to Hood River. We started hitching on 35 south. Got a ride to the middle
of nowhere from two climbers around Hood. We weren't picked up for an hour
or so before this couple from Trail Days let us in their dope covered truck bed
until 26. Next ride was a dude who hardly spoke that drove us through
beautiful Oregon desert with canyons and gorges. We were in Madras, a
town that would make more sense in SoCal. Our final hitch, all the way to
Bend was from an artist woman and she dropped us off at the Bunks + Brew
hostel? More to come, but later. I'm tired.

August 24, 2019

The hostel there was fantastic. They had a guitar! I got to restring the high E too, so I felt some ownership while playing. Everybody was chillin' and talking in the gazebo outside, the smoking area. A hostel worker named Jacob gave me The Cosmic Serpent: DNA and the Origins of Knowledge. It's about Ayahuasca shamanism and its implications for the world of Science. Cool book. I was up until ~~a~~ 1am reading it as a teapot steamed nearby and the noise of the hostel drifted and faded away.
The next day I tried to leave. I went out to hitch on Highway 20 but no dice. Not that I really tried all that hard. All I really wanted to do was finish the book I did, and I figured I might as well put it back at the hostel and Pepe was staying another night so I bought one too. I'm really glad I did, too. Three of the workers were going to float the Deschutes and asked if I was in. I guess because I talked to one about ~~King~~ ~~Stinson~~ King Lizard and the Gizzard Wizard. The tubing was fantastic. We smoked and drank on the river. Then there were rapids. Intrepid. We walked back afterwards through the lovely Drake Park and downtown. Bend, I think, is my favorite trail town. The downtown basically reminded me of Bardstown Road. Less crazy people though. Except for me. Someone at the hostel, Alan I believe, gave me porkchops because he wouldn't be around to eat them and then Gage prepared them for me. I didn't even ask. Poor guy has had Giardia. He didn't deserve it!
The next day Pepe found a trail angel who took us back to McKenzie and I found my way ~12 miles through the lava rocks to BLYC where I washed my clothes & my self for free and did some journaling while an all too lively band of Northbounders (for once) were annoying. They meant well, but they made me feel like Squidward.
The next day? Rain. Not in the morning, but throughout all of the afternoon & night. It was kind of dope though. I listened to an audio book called Ishmael that was really good while the rain and wind pounded my jacket. Burn areas enveloped in fog. The lake whose borders were lost in the mist. The blank meadow. Murky mask's passing. White washed ridgeline winds. I set up camp at 21 miles in and talked to Pepe.
It rained all night and the morning made up for it. Fantastic views of Jefferson all day, actually. I had to go over some elevation to get into Hood Wilderness, but I couldn't mind because the miles before that were ~~at the~~ through flat sunny meadows at the base of mighty Mount Jefferson. Lots of scree after that, climb but still beautiful. Desert on the eastern horizon and mountains on the western. Came down on

into a tiny camp resort called Olallie Lake where I picked huckleberries and marshmallows (the latter from a bush, the latter from a hikerbox) for the day to come. I was going to attempt the 50 mile day challenge. Four AM alarm.
Didn't get moving until six-forty. All hope seemed lost. However, I changed my mind. I was going to make it, goddammit. I passed people I had camped with. They all cheered me on. Great, Grateful Dead was on. I was rolling. 32 miles in, it was ~~4~~ 8 pm and I could see the lodge across the valley [illegible] Mount Hood whose rim we would round to the lodge. I took a 2 1/2 hour nap on the side of Highway 26 ~~[illegible]~~ out of desperation. So deep was my exhaustion that sleep came quickly, resisting the frequent attempts of lonely senses in the dark to dazzle my eyes to wakefulness and shake my ears alert. I wonder if any drivers saw me there, and if so, how they rationalized it.
Against my better judgement I got up at 1AM and continued to hike. I only had 10 miles left afterall. Even if the last 5 were dreadfully uphill to the lodge. I was stumbling and resting all until the trees at last died away and in the moonlit dome I stood at the base of Mt. Hood and looked away at the other silhouettes spreading out forever below the stars. After a million-years-mile I made it to camp, at 5:12AM, having come 51.3 miles. Hell yeah.
This morning I engorged myself at the breakfast buffet and have since smoked a joint with Pepe and admired the craftsmanship of the lodge. Beautiful place. I would love to stay here someday! It's truly one of a kind.
Now, being that these updates have encompassed so much, there are some details I have forgotten to include, such as:

- Running from camp to gas station in Sisters while Pepe stood and waited to buy stuff
- The wonderful coffee shop in Sisters. Lodge-style
- Smith Rocks
- Someone gave me new shorts today
- There were fireworks across the Columbia on the last night of PCT Days

August 29, 2019

There's a rainstorm this morning that I have decided to wait out in my tent.
Sat in the Blue Ox Bar at Timberline which is this tiny bar almost hidden

through a tiny door. It has a bunch of mosaics of Paul Bunyan and Babe the blue ox. I got a pizza that was good but not filling. I guess I was just there for the atmosphere, really. Not too long after I hit the trail again but I only made it like 3 miles down to Zig Zag River and cowboy camped there. My left foot's Achilles was really in pain from the 50 and also I was tired. There was a weird light on the other side of the canyon that night and shadows of people kept crossing in front of it.

For the first 7 miles or so of the next day my foot still hurt pretty bad. I was walking all around the ridges and rivers building up to and cascading down from Mount Hood. There was one river in particular, the Sandy River, whose gorge was absolutely beautiful. If you looked up it you could see the top of the mountain through the mist. There were lots of tourists in the area because it was a weekend, there was a nearby loop trail to see Ramona Falls, and also Mt. Hood is fairly close to Portland. I really hated it. Day hikers or trail runners or weekend campers are just so frustrating sometimes. Ultimately though, it was good that I was there on a weekend because at a place called Lolo Pass there was a guy doing trail magic who had hiked the PCT in 1977, Woah. The magic was really good; cookies, hot dogs, the man even had ice cream. Good conversation, too. I met up with a couple of hikers who I hadn't seen since Claire introduced me at Trail Days Mule Days in Bishop. They're a Norwegian couple who are very fun to be around. There were some fantastic views of Mount Hood and I made it eventually 30 miles from camp to Wahtum Lake, 17 miles to Cascade Locks, along the way I was also able to catch sight of Mount Adams, Mount St. Helens, and as conversation revealed at camp that night, even Mount Rainier.

The next day was almost all downhill into town. We probably lost at least 4,000 feet. Rolling into the Locks felt so good. I was with a German dude at the time. I got ice cream immediately. After the ice cream I resupplied, and I sat outside the grocery store for a long while packing it all in and talking with a European couple that I talked with at Timberline. Then, who shows up but Pepe. He was camping at the Marine Park. I joined him and we smoked and had beers while some dude talked about his back injury and made the interesting comparison between trail life and jail life.

Pepe and I walked the Bridge of the Gods the next morning and immediately hitched to Stevenson because there's a dispensary there and from what I understand it may be the last one on trail. Pepe was able to get me 3/8 Ounce with the $45 I gave him, so I'm pretty happy.

It took forever to get back to the trail but once we did we had to pay for that long downhill of the day before. It was 11.4 miles and ~3000 feet. Ugh. We stopped frequently. About 4 miles from the top we met 41 year old hiker Shane Brown who had self-diagnosed Giardia and could not move another step. It became Pepe and I's job to get service and call 911 for the guy. We did it, but it took forever and so the two of us just camped at the top of the climb. I had an awesome view of the gorge, too.

This morning was alright. I was behind schedule for a 30 but not too bad and I was mostly taking it easy. There was a big climb (but moderate-big) and at the top it was around noon so I took an hour lunch and read. I kept hiking through forest but the forest was cool for how dense it was. Tons of ferns and stuff in the understory. Very Washington-esque. I was coming down from lunch and that big climb when I found a grand viewpoint of the valley I was headed into. I decided to roll up a joint. I have decided that it is the process of assembly that makes rolling a joint so satisfying. You begin with just random materials and by the end you've got something to smoke!

And a good smoke it was too. That was the first joint of my Stevenson weed and I chose the strain with the lowest THC content to start with (Permafrost 18.2%). ~~Afte~~ Ayoted. Positively ryoted. Super good high though. I realized you could see ~~Trout~~ of Trout Creek from the viewpoint. I was able to see stones at the bottom of pools in the creek clearly from my great height. So cool. There was also somebody's land that was very meadowy.

I talked to some dudes doing trail work towards the bottom and hiked on over the Trout Creek Bridge. Somewhere in between there and Wind River I was walking past a tall, brown-grass meadow separated from the trail by a thin line of trees. I was stealing glances of it through them when I could vaguely see an elk with antlers on the other side. I crept to the edge of the meadow but saw nothing. I turned back to trail and there was an elk in the path a hundred feet or so away. It was gone when I got to where it had been but there I had a clear view of a Bull elk doing the squeaking thing in the meadow before running off. So cool. ~~Also Above~~ Later there was a book that asked hikers to write down stories for little kids so I did and that was fun. Afterwards I took a break at Panther Creek and prepared for the long climb afterwards. Some SOBOs told me it wasn't bad and they were right. Also, along the way were some of the largest trees I've

yet seen on trail. They were those just enormous. And obviously ancient. So beautiful. I camped here last night, a Guthooks acclaimed spot 32 miles from where I started, and I made it pretty late in. It was around 8:30pm. I thought Pepe might be here but I was alone so I just decided to cowboy camp and get to bed ASAP. I remember at first the stars were beautiful. Super clear Milky Way and everything else. But then I woke up a couple times and could see none. Then I was getting rained on. Lightly, but still. There was another hiker there now, and he was awake too. We set up our tents and got back in for more sleep. I woke up a couple of hours ago but it's still raining. I need to decide if I'm going to ride it all the way until it stops or if I'm going to suck it up and hike.

Update: I'm staying here.

September 3, 2019

Wound up being an okay day, that last one. I was however, tired for most of it. I only even did 17 miles but it felt like a Herculean effort. I was also sad because I hadn't seen Pepe, and so I got the sense it was time to mentally say Goodbye. It wasn't easy. Maybe I'll see him again, but as of yet I still haven't.

I was camped that night at a place called Bear Lake, 20 miles I think from FR23 to Trout Lake. As usual I got up pretty late from camp but I was making good progress. It was a wonderful day of hiking. I met this guy named Midnight Joker with a ski boundary signon his pack and a pool noodle foam sword. With him was a local out hunting bear that weekend who gave me meat + cheese. I made it to a stream I knew was 10 miles from camp pretty easily. I had been in a really sweet meditative place all day. The next ten weren't as easy but they were still cool. There were tons of little frogs on the trail and more super ancient enormous Douglas Firs. I made it another 5 miles and Midnight Joker told me I had 5 more. Turns out most of it was uphill, but I didn't give a crap. For some reason right then I just wanted to give it all the gas. I was flying up that hill. It helped that I needed to make it to the road by 3:30pm (2 hours) or miss the shuttle to town, but really I just wanted to burn. I passed a dirt road which an old couple in a camper drove down shortly after and they saw me and I felt like Superman.

When I got to the road I wasn't sure if it was the right one. I figured it was, though, and hung out a while. Sure enough, a pickup full of hikers pulled up before long and I was the only guy to be shuttled that time. He was an older fellow he that looked way too young to have fought in Vietnam, but sure enough. Also he told me about segregation. Crazy that he was that old. But anyway we made it to town. The place was nice. Basically a bustling main street

and not much else. The place has a lot of charm. However, once I had settled in a bit
bit and smoked I decided to shower. Maybe this is just because I got a bit too high (th
was my first joint of the Sour OG), but the whole place (as I saw on my way) seemed
really, really trashy. This is definitely a delusion that I frequently have when I
get too high, ~~Ebb~~ (i.e. Yosemite) but I also think I was right. Especially because the
showers were in this KOA type place and yeah. There was this totally indecipherable
poem tacked to a message board on the building. I only remember the first stanza:

"What you seek ~~for~~
Finds where you eat
And shows you how to dance."

Like, what? I'm hoping this is some kind of Baccus and ~~Polutar~~ Philemon style
prophecy but I have my doubts. Then I went down to the café and enjoyed my
dinner but there were flies inside. Nobody showed me how to dance, either.
I cowboy camped as close to the general store as possible to grab wifi and watch
Frasier. I'm not really sure I like that show, or if I ever really did. It
felt like I was wasting my waste - time - time by watching it.
The next morning I smoked and had coffee and a bad breakfast burrito. Then I caught
the Shuttle at 9 AM! I got into the right hand corner by the cab. Nine other hikers
filled in the remaining space. It was packed AF. Initially, as the ride was just beginning,
I was excited. I was listening to the 3rd movement from Beetoven's 15th String Quartet
that Spandrell loves in Point Counter Point (finished, loved it) and the trees were going by at
that pleasant bewildering speed. But then I started getting too bewildered. As the truck
flew around turns and ~~the~~ we all started to lean I became all too aware of my
own mortality. Most terrifying 30 minutes of the last month, anyway. I wanted
to brace myself against something but I knew it wouldn't have mattered. If anything
went wrong at all it'd have been 10 dead hikers. I was trembling when we made it,
but we made it.

The rest of that day was awesome, except for passing the spot where this guy was
killed by ~~the~~ a tree falling on him. Awful. But then there were fantastic views
of Mount Adams and also, Pika everywhere! Also I lost my PCT bandana ~~but~~ but
someone (Leg - Wrap) found it and returned it a couple hours later. As if this weren't a
day enough, in the evening ~~we~~ basically everyone from the shuttle was at this awesome

trail magic run by a family from Seattle. Best magic I've had for certain. They had beers, dried prunes, burgers, joints dusted in kief, and great conversation around a roaring campfire. Then they even let us stay the night and get breakfast. Amazing, amazing people.
And that day was fantastic afterwards, too. Goat Rocks Wilderness, baby! Amazing. The whole thing. Lots of weekenders etc but it was so beautiful who cares. High rocky crags tumbling down into meadows watered by streams of a gentle glass. But the evening brought clouds to high elevations. This was no good. I was looking forward to hiking the Knife's Edge for the view but I could see clouds enveloping it. Was it even worth going? Maybe not but dammit I was going up anyway. On the way I saw a tentsite. It was already six, after all. And in the morning, who knows? Could be views. I set up camp.
Nervously the next morning I moved to poke my head out from under the rain fly. Would it be white-out there? All my efforts in vain? Once in the wind and light of day I blinked. Clearly, pristinely, you could see Adams, St. Helens, and Rainier. Each was standing prominently up from a frozen sea of clouds filling the valleys. Hilltop islands showed their reverence to them. I walked the Edge feeling victorious and thankful.
Later I came upon an old weathered hand telling me to stop. The bearded man behind it pointed up the mountainside. Within a hundred feet of us, just below the ridge, were six mountain goats. I had never expected to see them so close. Amazing.
That afternoon I had done all my chores at White Pass (resupply box etc) (including trading Point Counter Point for the Song of Achilles) and decided to stay the night. I cowboy camped as close as possible to the gas station for wifi and watched Seinfeld this time.
This morning I left around 8 AM and could hear elk bugling through the podcasts I listened to (Eos Pisento). Today was mostly just woods hiking (though beautiful) but toward the late afternoon and evening I entered Mount Rainier National Park and everything is beautiful. Magical. Red huckleberry bushes falling down hillsides between the pines and then Rainier looking enormous and amazing. I'm camped here by Dewey Lake. Earlier I investigated a weird lone tripod in a field. I still hear Elk bugling. 'Night.
September 7th, 2019 - Writing Fiction
The party had had a good turn out. I could hear it's success from the bathroom. Voices locked in a performance of a symphony entitled "Obnoxiousness," written

by alcohol. ~~Sammy spun & was~~ Normally I'd have been playing too. A Trem
Horn hitting low notes at maximum volume. It wasn't working tonight. Too
many unfamiliar faces. I'd rather have left, but the faint spin of the tile below
me kept me rooted. ~~I hadn't even wanted to drink~~ Rachel had given me the
bottle. I took ~~two~~ some and she flitted off. I didn't follow. ~~It would be bette~~
~~to anguish in silence~~ ~~at least~~ at least, watching ~~her~~ go, Watching her go
I admitted nothing. There were other standbys around, reserving animation
until she or Sammy or Trey came by. I'd probably just drop into some room
to sleep once finished. ~~at least I knew drinking~~ I flushed. ~~Stepp~~ The
~~Sound~~ noise resounded. The music had stopped. ~~No voices either~~ The door creaked as I
stepped into the hall. I couldn't see anyone in the living room. I stepped up to
the threshold. "Hello?" The question shattered. Everything in my ears fell
dead like broken glass and the screaming high pitch ~~pushed the~~ that ~~remained~~
filled it ground what was left to dust in the mortar of my ear drums. I covered
my ears, I fell to the floor. The furrows of my mind, the my arms, my legs,
everything writhed and shook and I tried to scream but I could hear nothing
~~but that [illegible] the tone. over that scream~~ else. ~~Hat~~ Until I did. Slowly,
as island rising from the sea. a chant. I opened my eyes. Rachel, Trey, Sammy,
Trent. ~~were [illegible] leading the others~~ There they were in the ringing distance.
They were jumping and chanting. Their eyes squeezed shut. I crawled to
them. They were shouting over the scream. It was manic and desperate
but dammit it was working. It was the UK theme song, lost in frantic
rythm at the top of all of their lungs. I got up to join them. I jumped and joined
in. ~~But I~~ Something was wrong. I didn't know the words. I jumbled up the
beat. ~~I~~ They opened their eyes, red and wide, and found me. I was breaking
their rythm — the tone was ~~ex~~ pressing in through the cracks. They chanted louder
drowning me out. I couldn't keep it. I couldn't hear them I was I was falling
into the tone and they were glad to see me go it was me or everyone why couldn't
I keep along and the tone screamed louder I was on the ground my teeth clenched
and I sobbed

rhythm
rythm

September 10, 2019

Well, if I don't do something ~~about~~ keeping this thing more dry, the journal's going to be illegible. Really it's already getting there.

Anyway, that night at Dewey Lake was big trouble. Mice chewed through the tent mesh in one place to eat my Doritos. I kept the Doritos. Also a mouse got trapped in my tent so I killed it with my water bottle. It was every bit as brutal as it sounds. Fucked up. I felt terrible. But I did finally sleep after.

It was a good morning after, that though there were many day hikers. I took lunch at 9:30 AM at the parking lot they were all coming from. In the pit toilet were really good acoustics for throat singing. It was awesome! I read from the Song of Achilles there. Super good, then I hiked on. ~~to~~ The trail climbed up a ton (cum plete) until this pass past a lake and then we rode below the ridge a while and it was fun until it turned into a burn area. I put on FIDLAR FIDLAR to suit the scorched Earth aesthetic. Apparently there was crashed airplane wreckage somewhere near the trail but I didn't check it out because I had a goal: Mike Urich Cabin. I'm pretty sure it's the last cabin of the PCT. In an on-trail-shelter kind of way. Happily the trail eventually came back into the moist ol' Washington that we all know and love. On the way I snapped some cool toadstool photos. There was one final big climb before the cabin that I took like a hero, and then there I was, coming through the meadow that the cabin is on the edge of. There was a fire and plenty of folks. I met a whole new crowd, actually. First it was Double Play and Grim, then Forget-Me-Not, two women whose names I can't remember but who might be a couple as they share a bed & stuff. One is old-ish looking (at least severe) and blonde and the other looks younger and has brown hair. Then I met Eggy Strider. All of them are really fucking cool.

Cinnamon & Burrito also came by later and Burrito told me about when he worked for stay in a Japanese hostel and they would party all night then go to the fish market in the morning to sober up. Eggy Strider and I sang If 6 Was 9 together and Grim is the one who put it on. Then Grim, Forget-Me-Not, ~~and~~ Double Play and I all shared the loft of the cabin for the night. I did forget to mention that as the evening progressed we were able to watch mist rise up out of the tall grass. I had hung up my food bag but mice still got in and ate all of the Doritos. This time I threw them out.

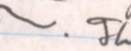
Next day was good. There was smoke in the air from some forest fire to the southeast but that was okay. The day was really dull. Not much to see but trees and trees except for that at the end of the day I could see some real jagged mountains on the northern horizon.

Grim and I wound up cowboy camping together on a dirt road ~28 miles from the cabin because there was service there. Turns out he is the guy who cut steps up Mather Pass. Like, goddamn. He showed me a video. And actually, I had heard of him before. Someone in Norcal had told me a story about someone who in the Sierra had only had enough battery on their phone to turn it on and listen to one song every day. He told me that story that night. Grim is a Californian with a capital 'C'. He lives in Orange County and is a hair dresser for rich clients. He's also ridiculously muscular and ethnically vague. See what I mean? But anyway, he proposed that at Snoqualmie Pass we take I-90 to Seattle to avoid the oncoming 4 days of storms. I said I'd think about it.

The next day was great. From that road I had ~18 miles to Snoqualmie. I expected a boring day but it was actually really nice! Tons of pika and cool views. The trail seemed to be getting into those mountains that had been on the horizon. I sat on a rock to read and take in lunch as well as the view. After coming over a kind of pass there were good views of the I-90 corridor. The expressway was deep in a valley, skirting the roots of mountains all around. I came up with a weird dance. I hope you remember it. Swinging the trekking poles. The mouth beat. Remember? Then I was coming down what would be a lame ski hill in winter into town. I went straight to the Washington Alpine Club. $20 hostel. Super duper amazing place. Ancient mountaineering equipment and photos all over the walls of the place. All of it was legitimate, too. The Club was founded in the '30's. The lounge was one of the most aesthetically complete places that I have ever seen. Old packs hung, old ice axes, chairs, couches, window-sill seating, bookshelves, the enormous fireplace, and the guitar hanging on a post. I zero-ed here 3 days.

It was all time well spent. I played guitar (learned Harvest Moon by Neil), finished Song of Achilles, wrote some, went in to town for dinner at the Aardvark Express, Pie for the People, and Squatch Box by the brewery, played chess with a dude named Noel, went swimming in a really cold stream with Forget-Me-Not and Double Play, etc. I shared my segment of the Male Dorm with Egg Strider and a guy named Trash a lope. They literally spent almost their entire double zero in their beds.

Pretty much everyone who was at the Ulrich's Cabin only left the WAC today. And what a beautiful day of hiking it was. As you may have guessed

from the condition of the pages, it was rainy. It can be supposed however that at this point in the year it is always going to be rainy. That being considered, wonderful day. At first it was a typical post unbe ascent but then there was this crazy cool ridge of solid stone that the trail rode and from it the view of a canyon was just beginning to open through the clouds. Later I saw the river valley I was in from a more central angle. There was a horseshoe kind of curve in the valley and I was here: . The clouds, swirling and dark as they were, showed off the whole valley to me at once. It was stunning. The high ridges are were all very sharp and craggy. ~~Or I~~ I also saw an enormous bird. I think it must have been an eagle of some kind. It was doing a sort of chirp that I think eagles are known to do. All as I walked dark pinnacles of stone wafted in and out of the aether. Below them I could see fragments of their forested roots. Snatches of truth glimpsed through obscurity; a landscape of the ~~subconscious~~ subconscious mind. I also got a face to face look at a marmot. That was cool. His hole was right next to the trail and he stood halfway out it and looked me in the eye. Then I did another pass and immediately it was super sunny and everything was clearly visible. There was a rainbow. There was another river valley deal and the trail went down one side then over to the other but just kept going down an even lower valley. Super sharp mountains all around. Spectacle Lake lives up to the hype. Also the Four Brothers and Chimney Rock. All so beautiful. You know it's beautiful when I'm referring to these motherfuckers by name. Anyway, it's getting late and the moon is riding high. Goodnight!

September 14, 2019

The next day felt a lot like a Sierra day in terms of landscape. From camp ~~we~~ I went up to some ridge-ish bit where to the Northwest was a super sharp mountain whose name I don't know. Below the mountain was a big old valley that stretched east and held Waptus Lake. The trail went down into the valley along Waptus Lake until it turned North and chased the Spinola River up to its home at Deep Lake. Deep Lake was sparkling and clear beneath the mountains West of it and Cathedral Rock to the North East. I was ascending the mountainside just South of Cathedral Rock, looking down. I went over the ridge at some pass oh yeah but wait that was the next day. Or wait, no. I went over the ridge by Cathedral Rock and made it to camp at Deception Lake. I talked to this dude who had done underwater photography of scuba divers at shipwrecks for a living. How cool is that?!

The next day I did some pass in the morning and wound up in a beautiful valley with this crazy view of a supersharp, snowy mountain far away that I think was Glacier Peak. ~~Sood~~ I walked right under Surprise Peak and above this be lake where I could see a dude laying on an inflatable rowing himself along the lake. It was an awesome hillside walk through red huckleberry bushes afterwards until the trail switched back to the bottom of the valley. To be honest I don't remember anything else this day until I came to Lake Susan Jane. I took a swim in it. Got naked and everything. I'm always skittish about these natural water source swims, but it was a sunny day and the water felt great. Before detailing town I forgot to mention that on the day before this there was a huge river & valley view and also a beautiful river gorge. But yeah, town. I was gonna ~~got~~ go to Leavenworth but then someone had called a shuttle to Skykomish so I just went there. Resupply was really expensive though so maybe I fucked up. I only have ~$50 so hopefully Stehekin's hiker box is fat. I stayed with the shuttle driver dude (Braveheart) as he offered. It was really nice. The shower, the bed, etc. However, the man himself was just a little annoying. He lived alone so he talked way too much and didn't listen much and also I think he was gay or something because he kept flirting. I s'pose. He did have a car from the '30s, though. Also it was a great night. So yeah. Skykomish was in a really beautiful place. At the low elevations like that there were deciduous trees showing fall colors. Beautiful.

We probably hit the trail around 12:30 or so the next day. Supposed to rain for the next week. It wasn't too bad that day. More dramatic mountain vistas and lakes and stuff, too. But by evening you couldn't see anything. I camped with another dude from Braveheart's named Canyon on Grizzly Peak. It rained pretty hard in the night while I was snug and dry reading Walt again.

This morning I left camp around 7:20 or something to a blank vista. It all stayed that way for a while but quickly cleared. When it did everything was so beautiful. The colors on the mountains are beautiful right now. The bushes are all reds, yellows, greens, browns, etc. And then pines and swirling vapors. It's a dreamland. Lots of beautiful mountains and valleys today but at ~15 miles for the day I started hearing gunfire like right on trail. I passed a hunting camp and before they saw me they fired so the near me (not in my direction, though) that I hit the ground instinctively.

The Dove

afterwards I was just uneasy. I came on to this huge, empty mountainside of a huge and empty valley. Looks like the valley runs west along Indian Creek. It was foreboding - The wind was cold and I was alone. I hadn't seen anyone since the hunters. I looked up at the ridge above me and saw the silhouette of a stag. It stood there as long as I watched it, turning its head at times in surveyance of its domain. The thing had the aura of a god. I hope it survives this season. I then transitioned to following the Northern mountainside of a valley following the North Fork Sauk River. The wind was still cold and the valley was extremely deep. There were no trees. I got vertigo from the sheer amount of space I was being confronted with. Clouds were being blown quickly from the other side of the valley, a land of piercing crags. When the trail finally came over the ridge I was happy, but still things were bleak. It was a barren alpine valley that just felt ~~pren~~ present somehow. I was unnerved. Suddenly the trail plunged way way down toward an enormous forested Basin and on the descent I met a Southbounder named "the Count." I was so relieved to see anyone. I told him it was weird up there and he said he was glad to leave the forest. It was too dense and dark, he said. Prince and the Pauper sort of situation. The trail really just plunged down into this valley. It felt like I was falling deeper and deeper into the shadows. It is a deep and dark forest, but I think it's cool (except for the goddamn mouse marauding my tent) because I passed a ton of beautiful mossy rivers and waterfalls etc. Now I'm at camp which is nice but it would be a lot better sans mouse! I had a good ~~Velve Velve~~ Velveeta dinner too, so it knows there's cheese. Peace! Or at least "cheese."

September 25, 2019

Well, I'm at home. The next morning I woke up and it was raining. I had had to kill a mouse in the night, and its body was floating in a puddle that was threatening to drown my tent. I packed up and began to hike in the rain. Everything was soaked pretty quick. My journal has been wet ~~for the past~~ since then. Thus, the lack of updates. That day started with a huge a uphill that was totally overgrown. All of the plants were wet and so I got soaked brushing through. I had also managed to get up to a very high elevation, so I was extremely cold. I didn't want to put on any warmer clothes because they'd have gotten soaked. I was so cold I was shivering and my teeth were chattering so after 9 miles of hiking and no sign of the weather's breaking I decided to pitch my tent. I was nervous I'd be die out there. I hadn't [illegible] person all day. Even though I was warm & dry enough in my tent, I didn't have much food

was still raining, and I was 54 miles still from Stehekin. I opened my tent flap
just to see anyone if they passed by. Soon Stephani did. He set up camp, too. Later, so
did Canyon. Stephani told his whole freaking life story. Dude almost never stops talking.
I was content to listen then, but as I got ~~to~~ stuck having to listen time after time I got
pretty tired of the guy. Canyon pointed out that we had camped together, he and I, 5 nights
in a row. I read all of the Violin of St. Jacques that evening. It was really good.
Super awesome descriptive style. The three of us got going at last the next day around 9 am.
It wasn't too bad, that next day. It misted throughout the morning when we climbed up
toward 7k and once I had gotten on down into the Suittle River Valley it rained
hard for ~30 minutes then the sun came out. There was an amazing
grove of ~~among~~ red cedars (?) that were like, at least 10 feet in diameter.
Beautiful trees. The trail walked right between tons of them and you felt
you were in a royal hall. Then there was a nice bridge over the
Suittle and I camped not long after that with Stephani

The next day was one of the most miserable of the entire
trail. First order of the day was an enormous climb to the top of Suittle Pass.
It was raining. Not misting, mind you, raining. I was pissed. I had been
hoping for a clear day. Whatever. I made it to the top of the climb after I
believe 10 miles of hiking and it was so cold up there. I noticed that for some
odd reason, the rain was falling slower. How strange! See it float on
the breeze. It was snowing. I freaked out. I just got super scared and
really sped up to get down the mountain ASAP. Above me you could see
the higher mountains through fog lightly powdered. I was really hungry
but too cold to stop and cook. I was out of snacks. I made it down the
mountain to the flatlands before Stehekin but still it was cold here and
miserable. I found a huge boulder angled that it provided shelter from the
rain and there I was going to make food in the cold when a guy whom I had
only met that day named Dip showed up and offered me extra snacks.
A godsend. He gave me an estimate! 1500 calories of snacks and I ate it all
right there. Later there was the beautiful Agnes Creek which
has made this badass gorge for itself through bedrock and I stood on
the edge of the gorge and observed a waterfall. I camped not too long

after.

The next morning the sound of rain drummed hard against my tent. I only had to go 5 miles to the road to Stehekin, so I was not inclined to leave shelter. Dip had also given me Nescafe so I made coffee and read Leaves of Grass while the rain fell. Very relaxing morning and when the rain stopped, I made my way on through the for forest, over the Agnes Creek on a couple of bridges, to Highbridge where in an hour or so a shuttle would be coming to take me into town. I spent the hour looking down at the water. There were ~~small~~ orange fish swimming upstream fast enough to stay still. When the shuttle came, many hikers got off and I went into town alone. Stehekin is an amazing little spot. It's on the shore of the breathtaking Lake Chelan, where mountains fall in stark cliffs down to the waterside. I ate at the bakery, making the mile and a half walk to and from the town center. There was a private garden where one could buy fruit but that also offered ~~religious~~ spiritual information. No one was there when I walked in and I did not need to buy anything so I left before they arrived. At the bakery I asked a waitress about any leave-a-book, take-a-books in town and she told me to go to the post office. I did and found there this enormous ~~hard~~ red hard back book with a man peeking out from behind a curtained window on the cover called the Sunlight Dialogues. Most of the stuff they had in ~~there was~~ the PO was garbage but evidently the author of this one had also written Grendel, which I believe Stewart has taught. The book was heavy and bulky, so of course I could not keep it, but curiosity compelled me to leaf through it a while anyway. Then when I decided to leave the post office I took it. No harm in carrying it around town, right? I ran into Avalanche and a gang of hikers going to smoke out on the pier. I joined them and it was great. We got dinner in the restaurant then I went off to camp. I read the Sunlight Dialogues until 1AM. It came with me when I left town around noon the next day.

The day was fairly uninteresting except for that I met a ranger whose desire was to be a rock climbing ranger who had been a Denali Mountain guide with 10 summits and had also climbed the South American 23,000 footer. Then I was taken into town to stay at Ravensong's (first solo PCT female) Roost. Stephanie was there and we watched Dances With Wolves.

He and I caught breakfast in Mazama the next morning and once again I hit the trail around 12. The views were good up there. Lots of sharp mountains. I listened to Crystal Ball by Styx like 40 times on repeat. I camped, after having met a British dude named Juna, with Animator Skip Battaglia. He was a cool dude who lived in Rochester, NY and had seen John Gardener's Mom perform a one act play written by her son. He gave me his card and I have watched some of his stuff. Cool guy. He gave me extra food ~~Go~~ for water.

Next day I woke up late, like 8AM. I climbed up a fog-washed hillside. Suddenly I noticed blue skies through the veil above me. They were dark but clear blue. Then I noticed a sharp series of peaks just across the valley. They became clearer and clearer, like the tide, the fog was receding down the mountainside. It was sloshing around the valley like soup carried clumsily. Beautiful. I made it 10 miles before trail magic. They had a full cocktail bar, beers and croissants. I was eating pulled pork croissants and drinking Sangria and other hikers showed up (Fairy Feet, Juna, Aussie Couple). Good times. I saw a beautiful sunset over cloudy peaks 5 miles afterwards, 1 mile from my future camp. I had wanted to do more miles. In order to finish the next day as Dad and I had planned, I would need to do 32 miles. Ugh. And it was gonna rain. I was not too excited. But I went to sleep well anyway.

I had a good start the next morning. As yet there was no rain. It didn't take long, though. I was hiking by 7AM and the rain probably began half an hour later. Beautiful day, though. Mountains enshrouded by mist and valleys of rushing river. Specifically that one pass I climbed after traversing a soft brown meadow. The top was below a high peak and the other side was a mythic valley. Beautiful. Later, before the last climb of the trail had ended, I was looking at the red, green, and brown hills interposed as they were with crumbling boulders and cliffs. Then downhill and bushwhacks in the rain until the border. It was drizzling while I was there but I had a brief and took my own photo. Then I did the 8 Canadian miles w/out much excitement and met up with Dad and we stayed at the lodge.

I think it was that night I had a dream I was riding a stool with wheels down a neighborhood street. The street got busier and I was flying through traffic. I was narrowly dodging cars and then I was flying too fast toward the curb. I was about to go into the air when I forced myself awake.
Dad drove me through Canada to the border (after I bought my first legal beer) and we got into the States fine. Drove to Seattle.
I rode the train into downtown (Westlake Station) and just wandered around a while. I ate at a Starbucks "Reserve" and then McDonald's. Didn't really want anything fancy.
We caught our flight at 5:30 or something and I saw Pikes Peak in Denver. Then home. It's been boring being here. I don't feel right about much. Today was my first full day, though really now it's the September 26, 2019
because it's like 3AM. I want to write a book. But I don't know anything else and I'm pretty unhappy. But then, I didn't utilize yesterday well. Today I'll use better. I'm gonna walk to Sefa once they open and try to write and read and whatever. Maybe I'll go to Carmichael's, too. It'll be nice to get a job. Though I may look crazy. I really don't want to get a haircut, though.
I don't think anything is different. It's like it never happened. I'm just back and nothing is any new. Nothing. Mom's got my room decorated in a very imposing way that doesn't seem to align with my sense of reality at all and I have to pick up Emma from school tomorrow and Dad's using pity to cajole me into driving with him up to Atherton to walk around the place twice with the dog and drive home.
I need to leave ASAP or I'll die somehow.
Thinking about any of it makes me want to burn the place down. They neuter everything. I hate it. On top of all of it I resent myself for being here. That's the problem. I don't really know what to do. I hope this period of my life ends quickly because I hate it.